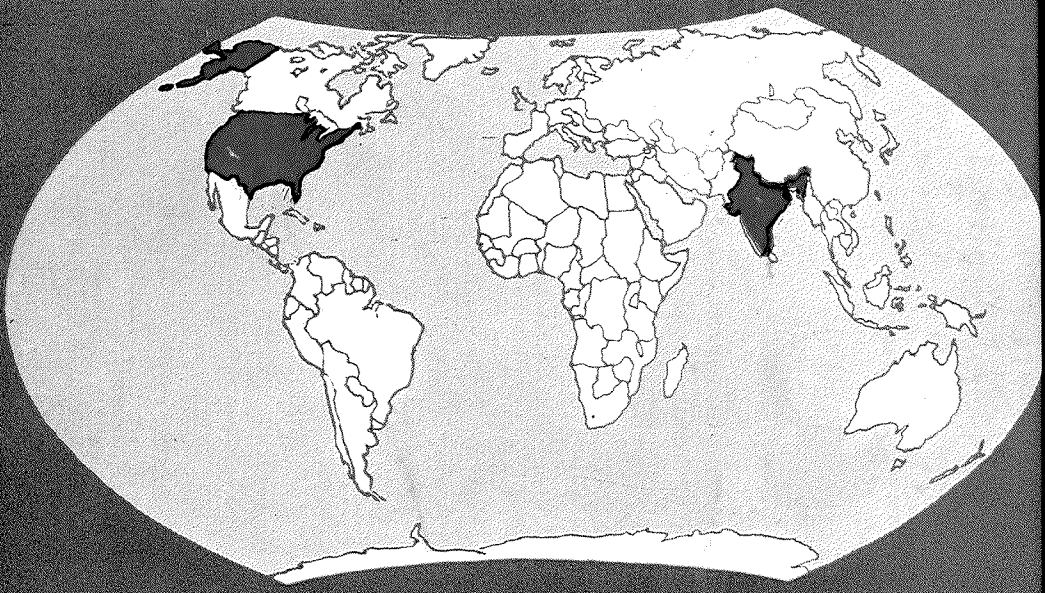
THE KISSINGER YEARS

Indo-American Relations



T. N. KAUL

THE KISSINGER YEARS

INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

T.N. KAUL

ARNOLD-HEINEMANN

In Faith and Friendship
To
The People of India and America

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Introduction

Relations between countries and nations, in the long run, are determined by the convergence or clash of their national interests. This, however, depends on a number of factors such as their geographical and geo-political situation, their social, economic and political strength, their cultural ethos, their past history and future perspectives. Individuals do play some part in shaping the policies and goals of their country and Government from time to time. Gandhi and Nehru are two outstanding examples in India. Franklin Roosevelt in the USA, Churchill in the UK, Lenin and Stalin in the USSR, Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai in China, Kenneth Kaunda and Julius Nyrere in Africa, Castro in Cuba, Nasser in Egypt, Tito in Yugoslavia and de Gaulle in France played an important role in their own countries. There are others like Nixon and Kissinger who make a momentary splash, but leave behind only minor ripples, and little else.

History is an impartial and strict judge of men and events. Attempts to 're-write' or distort history by suppressing facts or twisting them to suit one's policies do not succeed in the long run. Henry Kissinger's *White House Years* is a clever attempt to do this but fails to convince the impartial observer of events. His whole outlook is that of a European, a German-turned-American by a quirk of fate, trying to apply the nineteenth-century concepts of Metternich, Castlereagh and Bismarck to the present-day world. He bends over backwards to prove that he is more American than any other American. For him, 'power is the ultimate aphrodisiac' and his mind is deeply obsessed with its concept. Power for Kissinger and Nixon means political clout gained through the use or threat of military force. Hence their attempt throughout their years in office to act as the world's policemen, to dominate other countries and, if they failed to toe their line,

to frighten them through show of force, or the more clandestine methods of economic and political pressure as well as organised subversion to destabilise lawfully established and duly elected Governments.

Examples of this are to be found in Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia. Cuba and Chile, Cambodia and Vietnam, Bangla Desh and Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan are some of the many stellar failures of Kissinger and Nixon. India is a classic example of a non-aligned country that had much in common with the USA, but was alternately harassed and threatened, cajoled and deceived by the chameleon type policies of Nixon and Kissinger which changed colour and complexion to suit their mood of the moment. If there was any consistency in their policy towards India in particular, and Asia and the world in general, it was their unabashed and ill-concealed desire to dominate other countries and governments with use of any means, fair or foul, to achieve this end.

No single man has done more damage to the image of America in the eyes of the Third World than Nixon. The Christmas carpet bombing of Vietnam in December 1972, the devious and perfidious role played by the US Government in Cambodia under Kissinger's stewardship from 1969 to 1975, the double-faced policy towards India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, an attempt to divide the Arabs in order to weaken their stand against Israel and their friendship with the USSR, are only a few examples. They could be multiplied.

Dulles was more outspoken and one knew where one stood with him. But Kissinger through his Machiavellian methods and intellectual postures tried to give a respectable cover to similar and even more dangerous policies than those of Dulles.

But the object of this little book is not to decry any particular individual. Nixon and Kissinger have been criticised not because they are considered 'Super Strategists' or 'Star diplomats' or as typical Americans, but as symbols of an aberration in US policy. My purpose in writing this book is to point out the distortions in Indo-American relations, so that both countries may avoid the pitfalls of the past and work to-

wards a better future, The basis of any enduring relationship between two large countries, such as India and the USA, can only be mutual respect and understanding, reciprocity and non-interference in internal affairs. We must build our relationship on mature foundations rather than on an emotional, romantic and exaggerated picture of each in the mind of the other.

America could perhaps learn a thing or two from the USSR in dealing with Third World countries such as India. The Soviets have not tried to pressurise India as the US Administration has done. The Soviets are alive to the sensitivities and sensibilities of the Indian people. They do not take us for granted. American officials, on the other hand, seem to feel that because India is 'democratic' we must go along with them on each and every issue, and if we do not, then we must be denied their friendship and incur their displeasure. It is the same old Dulles doctrine : "those who are not with us are against us."

Similarly, the USSR could learn a few things from the Americans. Soviet officials are apt to be cagey, suspicious, bureaucratic and take much too long in finalising agreements even when acceptable in principle. The Americans are quick on the uptake, and will clinch a deal immediately if it is in their interest; but they drag their feet when they feel that they do not have an edge over the other side. Indians could learn a few things from both the Americans and the Russians. We incline to be gullible, show our anxiety to reach an agreement too readily, do not keep much up our sleeve to be used as bargaining counters and lay our cards on the table far too quickly, and rather early in the game.

These differences are, perhaps, largely due to different temperaments and are not basic. They can be got over if there is mutual trust, confidence, respect and understanding. I have invariably found that it is much easier and pleasanter to deal with the American and Russian peoples than with their Governments. Both are friendly, warm-hearted, frank and outspoken, as individuals. An Indian can get along very easily with them one to one. Therein lies the hope for the future of Indo-American relations and indeed of India's relations with the world at the people-to-people level.

It is in this hope that I have attempted a brief critique on Indo-US relations during the past few years—the Kissinger years. It would be necessary to do this at any time, but it is all the more important at present, when the Nixon-Kissinger policy of detente with China, confrontation with Russia and the latter's friends is showing some of its dangerous facets in our region—in Indochina, South and South-East Asia, the Indian Ocean area, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, the Gulf countries and in West and South-West Asia.

Has India a role to play ? Is Indo-American cooperation in the present circumstances possible ? Is Indo-Soviet friendship compatible with Indo-US friendship and normalisation of relations with China ? These are questions exercising the minds of statesmen in the world today and have been briefly touched upon in this book. The answers are not easy to find, but have to be found before the situation gets beyond control and engulfs this region in confrontation, conflict, and even conflageration.

I have deliberately confined my comments mainly to the first half of the Kissinger years, i.e. 1968-72. Kissinger's *White House Years* could perhaps have been better titled *A Treatise on Political Pornography* as hinted at by Bruce Page, Editor of the 'New Statesman', or more appropriately *A Treatise on Power, the Ultimate Aphrodisiac*. I hope that he may perhaps see some light and give a more honest, accurate and objective, and a less biased and distorted, account in his second book dealing with the years 1973-77. I, therefore, reserve my comments on this period to be incorporated in another book. I would not have embarked even on the present book but for the insistence and advice of many friends and former colleagues, both Americans and Indians. I am grateful to them for their advice and encouragement but my views and comments are entirely my own and not attributable to anyone else.

I have deliberately not consulted the Government of India or asked to see any official records because I did not wish to embarrass them in any way. I write as a 'liberated' diplomat, relying on my own recollections and such notes and diaries as I kept.

My thanks are due to my friends Mulk Raj Anand and Rashpal Malhotra and to my publisher Gulab Vazirani who would not let me leave Delhi until I had finished the job. I crave the indulgence of the reader for a few repetitions which have been deliberately retained for the sake of emphasis, and for my attempt to condense complex issues and problems in simple and terse language.

Hotel Ambassador
New Delhi, India
1 January 1980

T.N. KAUL

1

India and America

India is an ancient country with a recorded history going back to at least 5000 years. America is a young country and celebrated her bicentenary in 1976. Like all ancient countries, or perhaps even more than any other, India is tied down by centuries of tradition—good and bad—and finds it difficult readily to transform her social and economic structure to the demands and requirements of a modern society. America, on the other hand, is not bound down by ancient traditions and that is her advantage as well as disadvantage. She borrowed some basic and fundamental ideas from other countries, but adapted them to her own requirements, and in the process innovated new forms and techniques of Government and development. With an area three times and a population one-third that of India, America has been in a much more advantageous position to experiment with new ideas, particularly in the field of science and technology.

India achieved Independence in August 1947 after centuries of foreign imperialist rule. She has tried, in her own way, to give social and economic content to her political independence but it is not easy to telescope centuries into decades. Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru awakened their people, the masses and the intelligentsia to lay the foundations of a new and modern India. However, the fissiparous trends and tendencies which were lying dormant until deliberately encouraged by the imperialist rulers have come to the surface and are interdicting the smooth and rapid development of our body politic. These are normal teething troubles that a newly independent developing country has to go through. America also had to experience certain difficulties during the earlier

period of her independence and had even to fight a civil war to unite the north and the south.

The question that faces India today is whether she can go ahead with her social, political and economic development without breaking away from her basic ethos, imbibing modern ideas, techniques and technologies from the more developed countries in a peaceful and democratic manner. Jawaharlal Nehru, the maker of modern India, tried to steer India through the Cold War crisis by his policy of non-alignment or non-involvement with the mutually hostile military blocs of the world. John Foster Dulles dubbed non-alignment as 'immoral' on the premise 'those who are not with us are against us'. He was imbued with a missionary zeal against what he liked to call 'International Communism'. In this crusade he wanted to rope in as many newly independent countries as possible. Those, like India, who did not wish to get involved in this fanatical Cold War were looked upon with suspicion by Dulles and his types.

The result was a basic change in American policy towards India, in particular, and the developing world, in general. Previously, the US Administration under the leadership of Franklin Roosevelt had championed the cause of countries like India and exercised pressure on colonial Governments to recognise the writing on the wall and accede to the legitimate demands of people in bondage for freedom and independence.

The bonds between countries like America and India were based on shared and common ideals of freedom, of democracy, of the dignity of the human personality and the liberty of the individual. The Indian Constitution, though based on the British model, borrowed largely from the US Constitution, particularly in its Preamble, goals and directive principles. However, when America found world leadership virtually thrust on her shoulders, after World War II, and the world was confronted with two hostile military, political and ideological rival blocs, the previous American policy began to undergo a basic change because of her alliances with colonial powers.

India experienced the brunt of this change in American policy on the Kashmir question in and outside the United Nations. The American military aid agreement with Pakistan

was an attempt to prop up that country against India and pressurise India into giving up her policy of non-alignment. Although President Eisenhower gave oral and written assurances to Prime Minister Nehru that American armaments were supplied to Pakistan only against the threat of 'international communism' and would not be used against India, we know that they were used against us in 1965 and thereafter.

What is more, John Foster Dulles took a leading role in the formulation and signing of the Manila Treaty (SEATO) and the Baghdad Pact (CENTO). India reacted sharply to these developments but her remonstrances and protests were ignored by the US Administration. Attempts by India to normalise and strengthen her relations with China through the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954 and her repeated support to the right of the Peking Government to represent China inside the United Nations were resented by the US Administration during the Fifties and the Sixties.

However, India's position in the world and her role in and outside the United Nations were recognised by requesting her to accept the chairmanship of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) in Korea and of the three International Commissions for Supervision and Control (ICSC) in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. India's helpful, constructive and positive role was also recognised during the Suez crisis.

As more and more newly independent countries joined the non-aligned group, the concept of non-alignment began to be accepted by the rest of the world as a viable policy for the Third World. Non-alignment acquired new drive and momentum and began to exert its influence in various parts of the world which were still struggling for freedom and against racial discrimination. The role played by India as a founding member of the Non-aligned Movement was significant, and gave the movement a positive direction. The US Administration became outwardly neutral to the non-aligned movement, after John Foster Dulles, but did not seem to like the independent policies adopted by many of the non-aligned countries in their foreign relations. The Cold War became less acute in the military sense, but political, economic and ideological rivalries between the two blocs grew even sharper than before. The US Administration did not like the increasing friendship

and cooperation between the socialist countries and India. It accused India of leaning more to the USSR than to the USA. The fact was that it was the USSR that was leaning towards the non-aligned countries, in and outside the UN, in their struggle against colonialism and racialism.

India's friendship with the Soviet Union was an assertion of her sovereign right to develop cooperative and friendly relations with all countries of the world, irrespective of their social or political systems and was based on equality, reciprocity, mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs. Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to the Soviet Union in 1955 was a turning point in Indo-Soviet relations. The return visit of Khrushchev and Bulganin to India in 1956 further strengthened the prospects of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. The US Administration did not like this developing friendship but there was little it could do to stop it, so it started to prop up Pakistan against India, politically and militarily, but extended economic cooperation to both.

After Nehru's death in May 1964, the US Administration tried to take advantage of the situation and weaken the friendship between India and the Soviet Union. However, Lal Bahadur Shastri resisted the pressure. He tried to strengthen India's relations with both the USA and the USSR. The 1965 War between India and Pakistan revealed in all its gravity the results of the US policy of supporting Pakistan against India. Fortunately for India, and unfortunately for Pakistan, the large-scale military equipment supplied to Pakistan by America in the shape of Patton Tanks and Sabre Jets was perhaps too sophisticated for the Pakistani forces and proved more a liability than an asset. On the other hand, India's own defence production and the military hardware bought from the Soviet Union proved both efficient and effective in the hands of the better-trained and better educated Indian troops. Military rule in Pakistan had involved their armed forces in civil administration and adversely affected their morale, training, and professional efficiency.

When India was about to score a telling victory over Pakistan, the Western countries put pressure on India to accept a ceasefire. It was apparent from the statements made by the British and US Administrations that they

were partisan in their attitude. The statement of Harold Wilson, the then British Prime Minister, accusing India of having committed aggression on Pakistan is a glaring example. His later explanation that he had made it on the wrong advice of his Commonwealth Relations Office is hardly convincing.

The Soviet Union demonstrated its statesmanship in showing genuine interest for peace and security in the sub-continent by proposing the Tashkent Conference (for details, see my *Diplomancy in Peace and War*). The Tashkent Agreement proved that problems of the sub-continent could be solved through peaceful and bilateral discussions. America realised that she had perhaps backed the wrong horse, and imposed a ban on the supply of weapons both to India and to Pakistan. However, this pose of neutrality did not last long. As soon as Nixon became President, he revealed his prejudice against India and his predilection for Pakistan. He was helped in this shift in US policy and 'tilt' towards Pakistan and against India by his National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger. This combination of Nixon and Kissinger proved worse than any previous combination. As M.V. Kamath says in his book *Kissinger The Incomplete Diplomat*, "Kissinger has behaved, throughout the five years that he has so far been close to power, in the manner of one who has no doubts that he is right. During the turbulent days following the United States' bombing of Cambodia, when campuses, over the country erupted in violence in protest, Kissinger stood by Nixon without flinching. To the National Security Council Staff he said : 'we are the Presidents men and we must behave like them'. When some of Kissinger's own staff resigned, he angrily described them as 'the epitome of the cowardice of the Eastern Establishment'. Kamath quotes a writer in the 'Nation' who 'has been struck by the resemblance between Kissinger and Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Nazi Foreign Minister'. He also quotes a commentator's article in the 'National Review' headed 'A Foreign Policy without a Country' characterising Kissinger as 'an unassimilated outsider, a European by heritage and cultural choice, a cosmopolitan by circumstance, an American by deliberate and hazardous calculation'.

The above asssesments may appear to be somewhat harsh but they are borne out by facts. We are, however, not con-

cerned here with Nixon's and Kissinger's personal traits, but with the effect their policies had on Indo-US relations and peace and security in this region. We shall deal with this in greater detail in the following chapters.

2

Nixon and Kissinger

Nixon came on an unofficial visit to India in 1967. He was not holding any office at that time. He had been given a royal welcome in Pakistan where he was treated with honours due to the head of a Government or State. But in India he was given a vegetarian and non-alcoholic lunch by the then Deputy Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, at his house where I was present. I learnt later from some of Nixon's friends who were flying back with him in the same plane that he felt hurt at the cold reception that he had received in India. Nixon is a peculiar character—sensitive, even touchy, suffering from a feeling of insecurity and inferiority complex. He is apt to attach undue importance to little things. Nixon's predilection for Pakistan where he felt at home and prejudice against India which he could not understand were something natural in a man who was not great in himself and wanted perhaps to look bigger than he really was.

I recall an hour-long conversation with him in South Block during this visit of his. He argued passionately and vehemently against China, the Soviet Union and Vietnam. Our attempts to make him see the reality were of no avail. He had drawn a picture in his own mind that was far removed from the reality of Asia. He tried to fit these preconceived notions into the framework of his overall policy of US domination over the world and cutting the Soviet Union and her friends down to size.

Nixon was temperamental and his reactions were based not on reason but on his own strong feelings. As is mentioned in *Watergate, the Full Inside Story*: "In 1962, Nixon in a rage of resentment at his defeat announced his retirement from politics

and told reporters 'you won't have Nixon to kick around anymore'. Such outbursts might be forgivable in a losing candidate but would handicap a President". Nixon did stand for Presidentship in 1968 and won the race by a narrow margin against the Democratic candidate, Hubert Humphrey. Apart from Henry Kissinger, who was the only intellectual around him, he was surrounded by professional PR and advertising men like Haldeman and Ehrlichman. "Haldeman and Ehrlichman were openly described by pressmen and politicians of both parties alike as 'the two Germans'. The isolation of the President himself was attributed to the construction of a 'Berlin Wall' around him by his two closest aides." Some people were surprised that a man like Kissinger could have so well fitted into this set-up but Nixon obviously wanted an intellectual to give credence and respectability to his entourage. Kissinger was handy and jumped at Nixon's offer to become his Adviser for National Security Affairs. By early 1971, Dr. Henry Kissinger had become the second most powerful man in the Government. "Most liberals thought this was a good thing and that Kissinger's presence somehow guaranteed that the potential excesses of the administration would be kept within reasonable limits. This, as it turned out was a serious mistake."

Kissinger is an academician, but with a difference. For him academic pursuits are the means to achieving his own ambitions. Sometimes he takes delight in pseudo-intellectualism when it gives him a sensation of power. As he has admitted—'power is the ultimate aphrodisiac' and some people need such aphrodisiacs.

As Bruce Page writes in his review of Kissinger's *White House Years* in the 'New Statesman' "only a pseudo-intellectual could embrace the profoundly absurd idea that irrationality could ever have calculable consequences. . . 'Mind' or 'intelligence' which the Greeks taught us to respect consists in their intimate active fusion. Kissinger's book is an exercise in separating them." Referring to Cambodia, he adds: "All the real evidence suggests that the widening of the war into Cambodia was an irrational act; Kissinger's whole book is an attempt, by means of misdirection, evasion, suppression and narrative disaggregation, to clothe this and other irrationali-

ties in the appearance of sober statesmanship. Kissinger's account of American involvement in South-East Asia is a web of untruths."

Kissinger wrote a book on Metternich and another entitled *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* when he was at Harvard. From 1964 to 1968, Kissinger worked as Rockefeller's Foreign Affairs Adviser on his Presidential campaign. He was also a Consultant to the National Security Council during the John Kennedy Administration "but he seemed a ponderous figure in the wisecracking councils of Camelot." Nixon found in Kissinger a 'kindred soul', though different from his mental make-up; both believed in the use of power to attain their objectives. Nothing was sacrosanct or sacred which could not be violated in this power game. "The one-time Cold Warriors of the academic and political Worlds found they had a lot in common." (*Watergate The Full Inside Story*).

The Pentagon Papers published by the 'New York Times' revealed how "over a period of 14 months in 1969 and 1970, the United States conducted a total of 3639 secret B-52 bombing sorties against Cambodia—a country whose neutrality Washington then professed to respect. When this shocking story was published by the 'New York Times', Kissinger authorised wire-tapping of the telephone of some of his best friends and acquaintances." One of them Henry Brandon, correspondent of the London 'Sunday Times', remarked later, "Henry used to tell me that I was the one correspondent in this town that he had not tried to manipulate"! (*See Watergate*). The absence of any ethical or moral standards in the mental, emotional and intellectual make-up of Nixon and Kissinger explains the even more shocking revelations made during the Watergate affair.

My first meeting with Kissinger took place in his basement room at the Oval Office in the summer of 1969 when, as Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, I paid a visit to Washington D.C. We had a long discussion about Vietnam, Indo-US, Sino-Indian and Indo-Soviet relations, etc. Kissinger had not, by then, acquired the full power and strength that he was to gain later as Nixon's Secretary of State. He appeared to be, at that time, a reasonable, plausible, mild-mannered and soft-spoken academic. But as Bruce Mazlish says in his

Kissinger The European Mind in American Policy. "Kissinger was a mixed and complicated man, a 'Dr. Kissinger and Mr. Henry. . . There are two Kissingers. . .the paranoaic and the trusting man, the courtly and the boorish, the generous and the insensitive, the straight-forward and the duplicitous."

Nixon had just given his famous call for 'Vietnamising the war'. I had discussed this with several US statesmen before seeing Kissinger and was encouraged in my talks with them to venture to suggest that a better call would be to 'Vietnamise the peace' rather than 'Vietnamise the war'. I put this to Kissinger during my talk with him. He asked what exactly I had in mind. I explained to him that 'Vietnamising the peace' would shift the emphasis to talks and negotiations for a peaceful settlement between the North and South Vietnamese, while 'Vietnamising the war' would only encourage the South Vietnamese to fight the North Vietnamese in order to find a millitary solution. He listened with interest, paused for a while and then said it was a good idea and he would put it to the President. I learnt later that he had put it to Nixon but Nixon would not bite it. Obviously, Nixon thought that he could force a millitary solution in Vietnam through his puppets in the South and be able to withdraw US troops from Vietnam. Kissinger followed Nixon's policy to the hilt.

The 'intellectual' in Kissinger yielded to the power hungry instinct in him and his master. Kissinger did not hide his contempt for bureaucrats in the State Department and exploited Nixon's impatience with them gradually to reduce the Secretary of State Rogers from his key position. Nixon found in Kissinger a man after his own heart who would perhaps argue his view up to a point, but was willing to yield and carry out his Chief's orders faithfully and even enthusiastically (or should I say, 'venomously').

President Nixon halted in India for a day on his way from Guam in July 1969. He had already issued his much publicised Guam declaration. During his one-day stop-over, he held discussions with Indira Gandhi and some of her colleagues but there was no common ground between Nixon and them. Henry Kissinger visited India in July 1971, called on P.N. Haksar, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, and me separately. No one else was present during these discussions

on either side. He perhaps wanted to probe our minds to find out if there was any rift between us. We both told him, in our own words, what the Prime Minister had already told Nixon (for details, see Chapter 5).

Kissinger did not give any hint of his forthcoming secret visit to Peking. He is a man who likes a cloak of secrecy to shroud his movements sometimes. When he wants publicity, he acts as his own PRO and ensures that he gets it. Perhaps Nixon was not quite sure about the result of his (Kissinger's) efforts in Peking and therefore did not want to risk failure through publicity. This is typical of the two men who knew all the levers of power and how to manipulate them in order to gain their short-term objectives.

Kissinger loved the limelight not only for its own sake but also because it helped to project his views and influence people. He loved to act as a policeman in the trouble spots of the world, tried to put out the fires single-handed without taking anyone elso into confidence. He was indefatigable, with a clear idea of his immediate target, and concentrated all his energy and faculties on that particular objective. But his appetite was insatiable. Having hit one target, he had several lined up to be tackled one by one. This explains his irrepressible urge to move from capital to capital, government to government, prime minister to prime minister and monarch to monarch during his shuttle diplomacy. It was a one-man show carried out by Kissinger himself who acted as his own adviser and PRO. He, of course, took his trusted press correspondents with him in his special plane and deliberately did some kite-flying through them in order to test the winds blowing from various sides to keep his kites afloat. An old friend and colleague of his sent him a wire, "If only Metternich had US Airforce No. 1 at his disposal, imagine how much more he could have achieved!" or words to that effect.

So far as India is concerned, the Nixon-Kissinger policy was exposed in its ugly nakedness during the Bangladesh crisis and the Indo-Pak conflict in 1971. *The Anderson Papers* have revealed only a small part of what actually took place. Kissinger in his *White House Years* conceals more than he reveals. One has to piece together the information and facts

to project a complete picture. I do not wish to reveal any State secrets but I consider it necessary to mention the facts, as I know them, in order to enable the readers to judge for themselves. This must be done in some detail and I am therefore devoting a separate chapter to it.

3

Anglo-American and Sino-Soviet Policy (1947-66)

Nixon and Kissinger found it more palatable and congenial to deal with people like Yahya Khan who did not remonstrate with them, rather than with a leader like Indira Gandhi who was bold enough to tell them what was what. Apart from personal prejudice against Mrs Gandhi, which Nixon could not hide and Kissinger tried to conceal, there were other motivations behind the adventurous Kissinger-Nixon policies towards this sub-continent. Some of these are summarised below.

India had found by experience from 1947 onwards through the Sino-Indian War of 1962, and the Indo-Pak conflicts of 1948 and 1965 that she could not rely on the promises or help of the USA and the UK in matters that vitally affected her national interests. She had found in the Soviet Union a reliable friend whom she could depend upon in times of need because of the mutuality of interests. Indo-Soviet friendship was not based on emotional or sentimental grounds but on the hard facts of the situation prevailing in and around India.

The policy of the USA during the Fifties, on the Kashmir question and the supply of arms to Pakistan was aimed mainly, if not entirely, against India. The Sino-Indian conflict which had been brewing from 1959 and erupted in 1962 in a massive invasion by China, woke up India to the urgent necessity of mending her defences which had been neglected during British rule and in the first decade of India's independence. The lip-sympathy and marginal support that the USA offered were linked with the Kashmir question. The visit of Duncan Sandys,

Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations of the UK, and Dean Rusk, United States Secretary of State, during December 1962 was an attempt at pressurising India into conceding more than half the Kashmir valley to Pakistan.

The cat was out of the bag when Pakistan announced its 'provisional' agreement with China ceding over 4,000 square kilometres of Indian territory to China. This exposed the machinations of China and Pakistan on the one side and the motivations of the Anglo-Americans, on the other, so far as India was concerned. May be the Anglo-Americans thought that an Indo-Pak joint defence agreement, operated under their inspiration, supervision and control, could also be used against the Soviet Union. May be they thought that such an arrangement, dependent on military supplies from America and the UK, would bring India under their umbrella, which Pakistan had already accepted. It is also possible that in their calculations, the Anglo-Americans thought that with this powerful combination and the Sino-Soviet differences which had begun to come out into the open, China might stand aloof from the USSR and thus enable the Western powers to isolate the Soviet Union.

But what was there in it for India? Why should India have antagonised the Soviet Union and sacrificed this reliable neighbour's friendship for the doubtful support of distant and interested powers like the UK and the USA? It was the Soviet Union that had exercised its veto to support India's stand on Kashmir. It was the Soviet Union that had given moral, political and military support to India in her conflict with China in 1962, even though Peking was a 'fraternal ally' of Moscow and New Delhi only a 'friend'. No wonder that Prime Minister Nehru rejected the Rusk-Sandys proposal as soon as the Sino-Pak provisional agreement was announced.

It is not my pupose to deal with the Sino-Indian conflict or its aftermath in detail here. That would need a separate book in itself and several have already been written on the subject. It must be noted, however ironical it may sound, that 1962 marked the turning point in India's relations with the West as well with the Soviet Union. Pakistan, a member of the SEATO and the CENTO, an ally of America and the West, was coming closer and closer to China with the avowed

aim of hitting out at India. The Soviet Union, having a long common border with China, was naturally keen to befriend non-aligned India, to stem the tide of Chinese expansionism and possible Sino-US collusion with Pakistan and other countries in the region. There was thus a mutuality of interests between the Soviet Union and India.

India's policy of non-alignment did not mean that she should be neutral between or equi-distant from the Super and Great Powers, irrespective of their attitude on issues which affected her vital national interests. India did not need to have foreign troops on her soil, or to give military bases to foreign powers, in order to safeguard her territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. But India did need some reliable friends on whom she could depend for the supply of essential commodities like oil and defensive weapons in view of the continuing threat from China and the deliberate propping up of Pakistan by America.

It was, therefore, but natural that India should develop close and friendly relations with the USSR. India's trade and economic cooperation with the Soviet Union increased signinificantly between 1962 and 1966 when I represented my country in the Soviet Union as ambassador. India's cultural relations and cooperation in the field of science and technology with the USSR also improved significantly. Cooperation in the field of supply and production of armaments with the Soviet Union also developed but India took care not to be entirely dependent on the Soviet Union and tried to procure what she could from other countries like the USA, France, Britain, West Germany, Sweden, etc. At the same time, India succeeded in developing her own defence industry and got manufacturing rights from the USSR and some of these countries. However, she drew a blank from the USA in spite of repeated efforts and visits by her top officials. The UK was somewhat hesitant and halting. The Soviet Union responded positively and offered terms, on the basis of rupee payment, which were not only welcome in view of our shortage of foreign exchange and hard currencies, but also more economical in financial terms. It was not as if India was becoming subservient to or a satellite of the USSR. India was trying to become as self-reliant as possible and the

Soviet Union's cooperation helped her in this efforts both in the defence field and in the development of trade, oil, power, heavy industry and other fields.

The 1965 conflict between India and Pakistan exposed the negative policy of America and the West towards India and the positive attitude of the Soviet Union. The Tashkent Conference was an attempt by the Soviet Union to reduce American and Western influence on the sub-continent and to wean Pakistan away from their influence as well as that of China. It also had a significance in the fact that problems between two Asian countries were attempted to be resolved directly between them, away from the influence of China or the West, on Soviet-Asian soil with the good offices of the Soviet Government. Although the Tashkent Agreement did not resolve all the differences between India and Pakistan, it was a trend in that direction which ultimately led to the Simla Agreement of 1972. The Simla Agreement was an attempt to resolve bilateral differences between India and Pakistan bilaterally and peacefully without outside intervention. More about this later.

The 1965 conflict exposed the weaknesses of American and Western policy in the sub-continent. France and the UK now adopted a neutral attitude between India and Pakistan and the USA ostensibly did the same by imposing a ban on the supply of arms to both countries on the sub-continent.

This helped to reduce, to some extent, the tension on the sub-continent but did not suit China's policy of fishing in troubled waters. Instead of getting away from China's influence, Pakistan got closer to China because of the neutral or indifferent attitude of the Western World. Pakistan also tried to befriend the Soviet Union and weaken India's friendship with her. Pakistan's President Ayub Khan, visited the Soviet Union in April 1965 and was able to make a slight dent on some sections of the Soviet Party, the Government and the bureaucracy. The Soviet Union sent delegations to Pakistan and supplied some helicopters, trucks, earth-moving and radio equipment in an attempt to wean Pakistan away from China. It was, however, nothing compared to what Pakistan was getting from China. Even America was surreptitiously supplying Pakistan some

armaments in spite of the ban. France and other countries were giving Pakistan armaments on a commercial basis. Iran and some of the Gulf countries were diverting some of the arms from America and the West to Pakistan. Pakistan was training their armed forces and exploiting Islamic sentiments. Some Arab countries were financing Pakistan with foreign exchange to buy sophisticated weapons from the West.

All this encouraged Pakistan to launch an attack in the Rann of Kutch in Western India in April 1965. The British Prime Minister made an offer of arbitration which the Government of India accepted. The Arbitration Award was given not on the legal rights or wrongs of the case but as a compromise solution. It gave part of India's territory to Pakistan. India realised that British mediation had affected its interests adversely. But Pakistan felt encouraged to use force in other parts, particularly Kashmir, to wrest more concessions from India. The result was the Indo-Pak Conflict of 1965. When Pakistan tried to create trouble through military force in Kashmir, India had to take action against West Pakistan to deter the Pakistani infiltrators. The result of the 1965 conflict was a stalemate though India had a distinct edge over Pakistan.

India realised that she would have to mend and strengthen her defences, mainly with her own effort and with such help as she could get from countries which she could rely on in times of need. China and Pakistan were getting closer to each other and more and more hostile to India. America and the UK were adopting an outwardly neutral attitude but their sympathy was with Pakistan. The USSR was getting more and more friendly with India, partly because of her widening rift with China but mainly to safeguard her own interests and security. Thus, there developed a mutuality of national interests between India and the Soviet Union which was lacking in the policies of the USA and the UK.

India wanted to develop an area of peace, friendship and cooperation on the sub-continent, free from outside interference. This would be in the interest of both India and Pakistan. It also suited the Soviet Union which had no territorial disputes with either. But it did not suit China

which had territorial designs against India as well as expansionist ambitions in this region.

The Tashkent Agreement raised some hopes of normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan. Here was an opportunity for America and the West to encourage this trend. But America had other ideas and plans, especially when Nixon became President. We shall deal with this unfortunate development in the following chapters.

4

The Tilt

From 1965 to 1968, the Johnson Administration of America adopted a tough policy on Vietnam but tried to improve its relations with India. Indira Gandhi's visit to the USA after her election as Prime Minister in early 1966 recorded some improvement in the Indo-US relations. But the US Administration, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the advice of some conservative economists in India persuaded Mrs Gandhi to introduce a steep devaluation in the rate of exchange of the Indian rupee. Whether it was economically justified or not in principle, in practice it led to an economic disaster because no preparations had been made to take preliminary or follow-up actions to benefit from the 57% devaluation of the Indian rupee. The political effect was even more disastrous, as was shown in the 1967 General Elections when, for the first time, the Congress Party lost its large majority at the Centre and in some of the States. The ruling party at the Centre had, out of necessity, to depend more and more on some leftist parties like the CPI and regional ones like the DMK, with the result that some of the conservative elements in the Congress Party split and formed the Congress (O). Mrs Gandhi's Party had a slightly left-of-centre look and tried to introduce some progressive measures like bank nationalisation, abolition of the privileges of the princes, ceilings on land, etc., but failed to obtain a two-thirds majority in Parliament for amendments to the Constitution in order to push through these measures.

With the coming into power of President Nixon in America in 1969, the tilt in the US policy towards Pakistan

and against India began to take on clearer contours and sharper edges. In spite of the ban on armaments, the Pakistan Government managed to get surreptitiously some sophisticated weapons from the USA. Pakistan's efforts to make a dent on Indo-Soviet friendship made some headway but the Soviets soon realised that Pakistan was only trying to weaken India's relations with the Soviet Union and isolate India rather than get away from the Sino-US grip. Pakistan also made efforts to force its way into the non-aligned group even though it was still a member of two military alliances—SEATO and CENTO.

I recall a meeting of the senior officials of the non-aligned countries in Belgrade in August 1969, when four Pakistani Ambassadors from different countries were sent there to canvass support among the non-aligned group to seek Pakistan's entry into the club. They had made an impression not only on most of the Islamic countries in the non-aligned group but even on senior officials of the Yugoslav Government. As the representative of India, I had to make it clear in the plenary session and outside that if the criteria of non-alignment were to be violated by allowing Pakistan—a member of two military alliances in the context of the great power military rivalry—to enter the non-aligned club, then India as a founder-member of this club would seriously have to consider withdrawing from it. Some of the Arab and African countries supported our point of view. But Yugoslavia was hesitant. I had, therefore, to seek the intervention of President Tito himself to get the Yugoslav point of view on our side.

I am mentioning this because a similar trend was visible at the Non-aligned Foreign Ministers' Conference at Colombo in June 1979, and even at the Havana Summit in September. While Pakistan's entry into the non-aligned club after the dissolution of SEATO and CENTO may be justified, great care has to be taken to ensure that the criteria of non-alignment, formulated at the Belgrade Summit in 1961 and reaffirmed at the Cairo Summit in 1964, the Lusaka Summit in 1970 and the Algiers Summit in 1973, are not allowed to be diluted. This is all the more important at the present time when we see trends developing within the non-aligned movement of succumbing to Chinese and Western pressure to

deny the right of the revolutionary Government of Kampuchea to represent Cambodia at Havana. What is even more disturbing is the fact that many of the non-aligned countries have gone back on the consensus at Havana to keep Kampuchea's seat vacant, and have voted for the Pol Pot clique to take Kampuchea's seat in the UN. This is a disturbing trend, because in 1972 at the Non-aligned Foreign Ministers' Conference in Guyana and the Algiers Summit in 1973, Prince Sihanouk's Government in exile was allowed to represent Kampuchea, although it was not in control of the bulk of the territory of Kampuchea, while the new Revolutionary Government is in such control today. It is also surprising that while most non-aligned countries have recognised the new Revolutionary Government in Uganda, they are refusing to extend the same principle to the new Revolutionary Government in Kampuchea.

This development is not unconnected with the fact that the 1977 Summit was held in Havana, Cuba, and some big powers deliberately tried to disrupt the conference by encouraging divisions inside the non-aligned group. This is a subtle revival of the Dulles doctrine that 'non-alignment is immoral' and 'those who are not with us are against us'. It is a further strengthening of the Nixon doctrine identifying non-alignment with 'equi-distance' from the Super powers.

Nixon's Guam Declaration meant in effect, arming and encouraging 'Asians to fight Asians', increasing US influence in Asia and cutting down to size countries like India which were friendly towards the Soviet Union. No self-respecting country or Government, much less a country like Gandhi's and Nehru's India, would accept this doctrine. Nixon's one-day halt in New Delhi on his way back from Guam in 1969 failed because Nixon wanted India to accept and endorse this policy.

Kissinger tried to put a cover of respectability on this doctrine by giving it a philosophical touch. In a long conversation with me in July 1971 (for details see chapter V), he put across the view that India held a crucial and pivotal position in Asia; that the USA was not opposed to India's friendship with the Soviet Union because India was a great country and

would not submit to the domination of any other country; India was a mature country and could exercise a positive and constructive influence in the non-aligned movement. He went on to say that America appreciated India's apprehensions about China and would not do anything to encourage China in her plans of expansion. Pakistan was a smaller country, trying to find its identity, with an unstable political, economic and social structure. India had nothing to fear from Pakistan. America would see to it that Pakistan did not hurt India in any manner. However, it was important that India, as the 'dominant' country on the sub-continent, should be generous and magnanimous towards Pakistan. That would help in weaning Pakistan away from China's influence. If India and Pakistan could get together, they would be able to withstand all outside pressures in this region.

While Kissinger was harping on this note, he was already planning a clandestine visit to Peking from Pakistan. He gave no positive indication of his plan perhaps because he was not sure whether his visit would be successful or not. He did not want to give advance publicity to this move of his. This was to be his first meeting with the Peking leaders and he was too cautious and careful to enhance any risk of failure.

Here was Kissinger, the learned professor, clever politician, the cunning diplomat, trying to mislead the whole world, concealing his real purpose and intent by suppressing the truth and leading others astray.

Kissinger has, in his *White House Years*, tried to justify Nixon's tilt towards Pakistan on the ground that it helped America to normalise her relations with China. This is a hypocritical way of defending an indefensible policy on false premises. It exposes this global policy which now regards China to be of pivotal importance, for which any country in South or South-East Asia could be sacrificed. Nixon and Kissinger would have had no compunction in letting down Pakistan if it suited their purpose. The excuse, that Pakistan was helpful in providing a pipeline to Peking was a temporary factor. Already the Chinese leaders including Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-Lai were showing anxiety to have talks with Nixon and Kissinger. Surely, there were other channels, direct and indirect, available to Washington to contact Peking.

The real reason for the tilt was partly Nixon's suspicion of non-alignment, also his dislike for Mrs Gandhi's personality, his distrust of the Soviet Union and countries friendly to her, his desire to exploit Sino-Soviet differences, his ambition to make America the dominant power in the world by propping up aligned States like Pakistan and opposing independent non-aligned States like India. This, in brief, explains the method in the madness of Nixon, in antagonising a potentially great and genuinely friendly country like India for the sake of expediency and short-term advantages.

One would have expected a man of Kissinger's intellectual ability to soften the sharp angularities in Nixon's thinking and to take a long-range view of America's interests in Asia. But, for all his learning and scholarship, Kissinger is a tactician and not a strategist. He was inclined to take a short-sighted and ego-oriented position to gain temporary advantages rather than a long-range view based on the more enduring goals and ideals of a strategist. Instead of exercising a sobering and refining influence on the crude and knee-jerk reactions of Nixon, he only encouraged them to satisfy his own ego, as the most powerful Secretary of State America ever had. He wanted to go down in history as a tough guy who could employ nineteenth-century doctrines of balance of power and spheres of influence in the second half of the twentieth century in order to make America look like an unrivalled giant among many pygmies in the world.

The tactics adopted by Kissinger in asking his colleagues literally to boycott the then Indian Ambassador in the USA, L.K. Jha, his directive to keep him in 'deep freeze' in spite of his cordial personal relations with him, is an example of Kissingerian tough tactics to try to brow-beat sober and saner men. However, L.K. Jha, in his own soft-spoken and mild-mannered way, succeeded in neutralising Kissinger's tactics through his contact with the Senators, Congressmen and the media. Kissinger did not like this and even warned him to cut such contacts off. This shows to what length Kissinger could go in order to frighten other people. Kissinger was not dealing with an individual but with the Ambassador of India. He did not perhaps realise that India

was not a country that could be cowed down by these crude methods.

Kissinger's and Nixon's anxiety to befriend China at any cost, led to the short-sighted policy of supporting Pakistan in suppressing the genuine and legitimate aspirations of East Bengal. The attitude of the United States Administration, in particular of Nixon and Kissinger, as revealed in the *Anderson Papers*, is shocking to any man with a sense of decency and dignity. One could perhaps understand and forgive Nixon who was a man given to alternating moods of excitement and depression, but that a man like Kissinger with his cool, calculating, calm, unflappable temperament should have carried out Nixon's directive in a dumb and docile manner is indeed surprising. One would have given Kissinger the benefit of the doubt but for the fact that he is too clever by half to play any role docile or aggressive, unless it suits his own ego. As a disciple of Metternich and Bismarck and a believer in Machiavelli, Kissinger would not hesitate to use any means, however devious or hypocritical, to gain his immediate objective, which was to please Nixon, to gain importance in the White House, to denigrate the State Department, to belittle the Congress, to poohpooh and mislead the media and to show countries like India as 'upstart'. M.V. Kamath says in his book on Kissinger "Can a foreign policy long survive without the larger vision, the perceived moral purpose that alone provides the cement for a lasting peace? Beyond the tiresome phrases such as 'structure of peace' and 'conceptual breakthrough' and 'balance of power' lies an emptiness to be watered with humanity. Where there is no moral vision, nations fall apart. The complete diplomat is one who sees beyond the immediacy of national interests even while safeguarding them as is his duty. In that sense Kissinger remains the 'incomplete diplomat'.

Ronald Steel, as quoted by Kamath, goes even further : "With no clear standard and no discernable concept of the national interest other than the insatiable quest for power and prestige, Kissinger's diplomacy is not a foundation on which to build what he calls a 'structure of peace'. Rather it is a series of feats—brilliantly engineered, dazzlingly choreographed; and lovingly reported by the press. The feats are

already proving ephemeral because they are personal deals that have left deeper economic and political conflicts unresolved. So widely admired today for his unquestionable intelligence, style and negotiating process, Henry Kissinger is more likely to be remembered as an agile manipulator than as a great architect."

This may sound like a harsh judgement but I speak with personal experience based on my close dealings with a man who poses to be a great strategist but is really a short-sighted, ego-oriented and biased tactician, so far as India and Asia are concerned. The facts on which I base the statement cover my tenure as Foreign Secretary (1968-72) and as Ambassador of India to the USA (1973-76).

Let the reader judge for himself.

5

Conversation with Kissinger

(Summary of a verbatim record, July 1971)

During an informal and intimate *tete-a-tete in Delhi* Kissinger told me he wanted to have "a quiet chat alone" with me. I told Kissinger that I was aware of his talk with P.N. Haksar earlier in the morning and did not wish to repeat all that he had said because "we work in very close coordination." I then asked Kissinger why our two countries and Governments did not have a clear understanding of each other's policies and interests—regional, global and national. I asked him to enlighten me as to: "What the present US policy is; What are your future perspectives in this sub-continent and in this region?"

Kissinger was cautious and careful that our talk should not be passed on "to the bureaucrats in the External Affairs Ministry or the State Department." I told him that I would not record our talks on official files. He then went on to say that the US Administration conducted its policies "essentially on an unsentimental and realistic basis, which we believe should pave the way for more permanent relations with other countries. India is a great power in her own right. Pakistan is a regional power. In India there is democracy with all its problems . . . . In the present situation, our first reaction was that the least we can afford to do, since it is the beginning of a civil war between East and West Pakistan, is that we should stay generally aloof. Regarding the massive execution of Hindus (in East Pakistan), it was really, strictly speaking, not an international problem, even though it was considered on an emotional basis here. Now we have a situation which is very

strange. We believe that a war between India and Pakistan would basically benefit only outside powers at this moment. It might bring China into the regional war. It might bring the Russian counter-pressure on the Chinese which, however, is not necessarily to the benefit of the sub-continent because it will enable them to say that it is really an international issue. From the very beginning we are going to try to keep our influence on Pakistan with a view to pushing it towards a political solution that will enable the refugees to go back, with only one proviso, that if the refugees want to go back, they should not be used as the political pawn and you should not say 'unless there is a certain political type of settlement, they won't go back'. We think there is a reasonable opportunity; they have to go back if they want to, you should not push them."

He then went on to criticise the bureaucrats and suggested that we should open a channel of direct contact with him, bypassing the State Department. He said he had such arrangements with some European countries. I told him that we had one of our ablest Ambassadors in Washington and he could use him as a direct channel. He replied : "I think your present Ambassador in Washington has the intellectual qualities but I do not know whether he has your confidence." I told him that he had our full confidence. Kissinger then replied : "Occasionally, perhaps you or Haksar or both of you could come to Washington or we could meet in London or San Fransisco."

After this preliminary exchange, he said : "We should place the greatest stress on our agreements. We are bound to disagree on some issues. *We know you have close relations with the Soviet Union as well and that frankly, does not really bother us. We are not competing in this area with the Soviet Union. You conduct your independent policy. I know that your relations with the Soviet Union will grow. It is necessary for you, as you will not, in a conflict between us and the Soviet Union, wish to support one side or the other.*" I replied that our relations with the Soviet Union had never inhibited us from speaking out on issues which affected our national interests or the interest of peace and security of this region or of the world. Our record in the United Nations

proved this. I added : "Our relations with you would in no way inhibit us from developing friendly relations with other countries. Our size, our history, our traditions are a strong base for our independent foreign policy."

I then told him that the political, economic and now the refugee problems were having a serious impact on the peace and security of the sub-continent. I added : "you said, any conflict between India and Pakistan would benefit only outside powers, not only in the long run but in the short run. We have tried, particularly after 1965 and the Tashkent Agreement, to normalise relations with Pakistan, but we have drawn a blank. Even in matters of trade, they will not lift their embargo although we lifted ours unilaterally. We have to buy Pakistani raw jute from Chinese traders in Singapore at double the price at which Pakistan sells it to them. Pakistan has to buy coal from Poland and China at three times the price at which we could sell it to them. Fish in East Pakistan is rotting, while Calcutta wants more and more fish. Foodgrains have to be sent from West to East Pakistan all the way around Colombo instead of our sending rice from West Bengal to East Bengal and getting foodgrains in return from West Pakistan. We could harness the Eastern rivers to our mutual advantage. These rivers are playing havoc equally in East Pakistan, in Assam and in West Bengal. We cannot harness them singly. We had hoped that after the elections a process of normalisation would be started. After the elections in Pakistan, we had sincerely hoped that there would be a settlement between Yahya Khan and Mujib. But we were greatly disappointed, like everybody else."

Kissinger replied : "We were amazed. We had absolutely no advance warning from you." I told him that we had none ourselves. However, I had told the Shahanshah of Iran, when I went to see him as Mrs Gandhi's Special Envoy in April 1971, that if Yahya was prepared to talk to Mujib and his colleagues, a settlement on the basis of the Six-Point formula might have been possible. I added : "Now I really doubt if even that is possible. We are not laying down any conditions. We say it is a matter between Dacca and Islamabad and is not something to be settled between Delhi and Islamabad." I further added : "You said that we should allow the refugees

to go back. There is no question of our not allowing them to go back." Kissinger seemed satisfied apparently but something was weighing on his mind. He went off at a tangent against his State Department and said : "I do not want to depend on diplomats. I get my briefings from the State Department. I was told I should tell you as Foreign Secretary that you should : (a) stop the guerrilla movement and (b) we have information that you are preventing the refugees from going back except on your conditions. Strictly between us, I objected to this and prevented any formal representation like that to be made to you because I do not know whether you have prevented any refugees from going back and, secondly, that is no way to deal with the problem."

I replied : "I shall be equally frank with you. As for preventing the refugees from going back, except on certain conditions, it is absolutely false. That is why I would like you to visit at least one refugee camp, any one you pick, and ask the refugees themselves. Whoever has visited them, they tell him : 'our homes have been destroyed, our fields and lands have been distributed to others, our relations have been killed. We won't go back until we are satisfied that we can go back with safety and with honour'—Hindus and Muslims alike." I further said : "It is true that about three thousand refugees did go back but that was due to the fear of an epidemic which had raged in Meghalaya near Assam on our side. The refugees came but when they saw the epidemic they went back. Apart from that there has been no case of refugees returning. But we are not preventing anyone from going back. How can we ?" Kissinger provoked me by saying : "I wonder if you could spread word among them that it was too dangerous to go back There are a hundred ways of telling them." Here was the suspicious Kissinger not believing our categorical assurances. I told him that it was not in our interest because we did not want an increasing number of refugees on our hands. The more the people that came in, the more difficult it would be for us to send them back, particularly Hindus.

As for the guerrillas, I told him : "It is an open border without any natural obstructions or barriers; movement to and fro has been going on across the border ever since Partition—smuggling of goods and arms and that kind of

thing. There have been small groups, both in West Bengal and in East Bengal, who have been training their own cadres. We do not want this movement to go under the leadership of the extreme anti-national and anti-social elements. However, there is no doubt that the younger people, particularly students, among the refugees who have crossed over have strong feelings. They are motivated. They feel they have been treated as a colony by West Pakistan and say : 'We will now fight to our death.' We have told them that it is easy to talk of fighting to death but actual fighting is another matter; it is not easy. But they are organising themselves. They are getting arms from various quarters. We do not want to involve ourselves with Pakistan, but we do not want these younger people to go under the leadership of the extreme anti-national elements. We are telling them to listen to their political leaders—the Awami League and others."

I asked : "What are we to do with this influx of refugees ? What are we to do to prevent actual tension rising in our sub-continent ? We know the dangers that the large influx of Hindu refugees is bringing. It is surprising that there is no religious communal upheaval in India so far. But we do not know how we can prevent it. If that happens, people with arms might drive the 60 million Muslims out of India to Pakistan since about 5 million Hindus have already been forced into India from East Pakistan. Already, there are 5 million refugees in West Bengal, half a million in Tripura and Assam each, and half a million in Meghalaya making a total of $6\frac{1}{2}$ million. These are the figures up to the 28th of June. Daily figures of influx of refugees vary between 40,000, 50,000 and 70,000." I asked : "Is this 'normalcy' in East Pakistan ? Still more refugees are pouring in every day. How would you advise us to solve this problem ? How would you tackle a similar problem in your country ?"*

Kissinger evaded a direct answer and said : "I have got so many problems. You can ask me how I would solve the Vietnam war. The Vietnam war started and nothing has

*We know how the U.S. Administration is reacting to the influx of only a few thousand refugees from Vietnam—the unfortunate Boat People, whom they had encouraged to leave but are not willing to receive.

stopped it uptil now. Now that I have been in this region, it is perfectly clear to me that pressure on you has been massive, so the problem is vigorously increasing. There are two ways conceivable—when the refugees go back—one is the possibility of some political settlement in East Pakistan. I do not know what it would be. West Pakistan can delay but it is definite that the Awami League will take over and may restore conditions of tranquillity and some individual liberties. The other way is that a settlement has to be made with Mujib—I expect it has got to be with Mujib—that in effect means independence for East Pakistan and probably it would not be accepted by West Pakistan. I do not know. I had not studied the problem as carefully as I will now that I have been here. You can be sure that I can initiate a Presidential Review of this issue the day I get back."

I replied that it was not a question of dealing with Mujib as an individual: "What matters is what he represents. He has already won 167 out of 169 Parliamentary seats in East Pakistan and you cannot ignore that. He was not demanding secession or independence at first. His programme was based on his Six Points which meant a larger degree of regional autonomy—in financial and other matters. This was no secret because Mujib and his Party fought the elections on the basis of this Six-Point programme, during the authority of the military regime. A settlement on the basis of this Six-Point formula could have been worked out but was not, because Bhutto did not want it. Yahya probably expected some kind of a coalition government with himself continuing as President. He would have Presidential powers and it would not be a strictly Parliamentary democracy like ours. Bhutto would work against Mujib and Mujib against Bhutto and Yahya would be able to have his way. I think the results of the elections surprised Bhutto and Yahya Khan. Tikka Khan, Hamid Khan and others who are military hotheads and do not have any political background advised him to take a tough line. Bhutto tried to play his own game. Now, the question is not one of arms. Whatever the solution, it must be acceptable to the elected leaders of Bangladesh and the West Pakistan authorities. We are nobody to reject them. In fact, our Foreign Minister said: 'Whether there is

independence, or semi-independence with some degree of autonomy, it is for them to decide'."

I added I had told the Shahanshah in April that it was my belief, that if Yahya was prepared to talk with Mujib, directly or indirectly, perhaps a settlement on the basis of the Six Points was still possible. "Today I really do not know whether it is possible. (I had advised Prince Suddruddin, the United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees, to meet Mujib when he went to West Pakistan but he was not successful in doing so.) The Shahanshah was favourably inclined towards this and he was totally against the line of Bhutto. He told me 'I know Bhutto as a personal friend but even Yahya would never talk to Mujib whom he calls a traitor.' The Shahanshah added : 'In politics one has to talk even with traitors.'

"The Shahanshah talked about the possibility of fresh elections in Pakistan. I told the Shah that I did not see how a democratic government could be set up with a breakaway group from the Awami League plus full elections for the other seats (to be declared vacant) when the refugees went back. This would not work. It would really prolong the struggle and the longer the struggle lasts, the surer it will come under the extremists' influence and we would be having another Vietnam on our hands." I said I did not think that would be good for Pakistan or India. I added : "Let them talk to the elected representatives. It may not be Mujib or Tajuddin, it could be anybody else."

Kissinger asked me : "What are you going to do now ? Supposing the struggle goes on for a few more months, I cannot visualise what you will achieve by military action." I replied : "*But we do not want military action.* If we had wanted millitary action, we could have taken it during the first few days when it would have been easier than it is now. But that would have been against our interests and against our policies. Pakistan was very much disorganised at that time and had only two Divisions or one Division plus an armoured Brigade in the East. They increased their strength later to four Divisions and have five Divisions plus now in East Pakistan. *The point is that we do not want war.*"

I added that we had hoped that international pressure would perhaps produce some result on Yahya Khan and his

colleagues. We were disappointed at his broadcast of 28 June. It was not a step forward but a step backward. "We have come reluctantly to the conclusion that international pressure—economic or political—is not going to influence Yahya Khan's decision. We do not want to rush into a military conflict with Pakistan because we know it would be suicidal for both countries and the only gainer will be outside powers. But we have to solve this problem of refugees and send them back. We could not prevent their coming (on humanitarian grounds). We cannot prevent their going back, armed or unarmed, to fight their war of liberation. We cannot prevent it and we will not prevent it," I said.

Kissinger intervened : "And I think you can prevent armed men. I mean they cannot get arms without you." I said : "They have other sources; in fact, we have been blamed by them for not giving them arms. But when such movements take place, arms are procured somehow." Kissinger replied : "As a matter of fact, I am not thinking of Hindus, armed Hindus, going back into East Pakistan. I am thinking of guerrilla warfare and I cannot say if that is possible in the monsoon. If the Hindus try to fight a guerrilla war in East Pakistan, it will unite the Muslims once again." I replied : "We do not look upon this as a Hindu-Muslim problem but as a movement for liberation." Kissinger argued that the majority of refugees were Hindus and pronounced his preconceived conclusion : "I think your choice is an attack by an organised military unit. There is no quick way you can win a guerrilla war and a long drawn out guerrilla war will multiply your problems."

Kissinger was trying to be clever and making presumptions on the basis of his own troubles in Vietnam. I replied : "That is why we are anxious that there should be a peaceful political settlement. The longer the war continues, the greater the risk of its falling under the influence of foreign and anti-national elements. That is why we are hoping that countries like the USA will be able to exercise some pressure on Yahya Khan. But when we see that even you are sending shipments of arms to Pakistan, there is confusion."

Kissinger feigned a look of surprise and said : "But look, our policy has been to maintain an influence over Yahya and, therefore, to turn the screws slowly. We have stopped the 'one-time exception'. It is a big thing because it was a special arrangement between the President and Yahya Khan, based on many things, including personal friendship."

He then tried to put the blame on the 'bureaucrats' in the State Department and said : "I do not know what the ways of the bureaucrats are. They say whatever is momentarily convenient. So far as the White House is concerned, I called a meeting of the Special Group when the trouble started on 25 March in Dacca. At that time it was considered largely a civil war. But even then the issue of arms came up. I ordered a review of what arms should be shipped to Pakistan at that moment. I was told that no shipment was of any consequence until September and so what I ordered was, with the approval of the President, that there should be maximum administrative delay."

I asked Kissinger : "Could not there be a total ban as there was in 1965 ?" Kissinger evaded the query and went on : "No one told me of the fact that the Pakistanis had already an order for arms in commercial channels. So when I saw the 'New York Times' report about this shipment of arms to Pakistan, I frankly thought that somebody had lost his mind. I was absolutely amazed. Then I discovered that there was a distinction between shipments through commercial channels and through depots; between things that were already licensed and things that were yet to be licensed; between goods that were on the docks and had already been paid for and other goods. In short, we were taken as much by surprise at the White House as your Foreign Minister. This issue reached our contact in the White House at the same time it reached the contact of your Foreign Minister. Our reaction was exactly the same as that of your Foreign Minister. We said that we did not believe it. However, nothing has moved which makes any difference to the military situation either in East Pakistan or even less to the balance between Pakistan and India. The question is symbolic. Your Foreign Minister while in America had, on the whole, satisfactory talks. At least the President was very pleased. We

could have made a decision to send our arms to Pakistan but there was no such decision."

I replied that it was unfortunate that even this decision about sending some arms to Pakistan had come on the very day our Foreign Minister returned to India. Kissinger answered : "That is without doubt correct. Our interests are on the side of India, I am glad to say. On the other hand, we have a certain relationship with Pakistan, on regional matters. One or two cases have created differences between us. But they do not still interfere with the basic situation in the sub-continent. When I go back I will take a personal interest and see how we can move matters in the direction of a political solution."

I told him : "To be frank with you, we are very pessimistic. The shipment by itself is not so important. But we look at the fact of the massive military arms aid that Pakistan has received since 1954 from the USA and, what is more, she is now receiving more arms from Iran. Kissinger butted in : "But not from us." I said : "Well, it is American equipment. I do not know whether your consent for its transfer is necessary or not. We have very reliable information that Iran is sending various types of arms and their spare parts to Pakistan. Zahidi (Foreign Minister of Iran) was very frank with me and said 'if any man tells you that we cannot send military weapons, planes, etc. to Pakistan, it is a lie. We are going to continue to do so.' Kissinger replied : "It is not authorised from the White House. Now you can believe or not believe it. In our relationship if I cheat you once, you know in the interest of our country, you won't believe me again." I replied that was why I was telling him about Iran in complete confinence. He replied : "I am not aware of all that. I just do not know. It is not to my knowledge and I shall see how it could be done without my knowing it."

Here was Kissinger pleading ignorance of what was being done with his knowledge and connivance. I told him that Iran was sending planes ostensibly for repairs to Pakistan and allowing Pakistan to keep them and use them against us. Kissinger promised he would look into this matter. He then went on to say : "Our policy is not that. We do not want a confrontation with Pakistan. We do not see what would be the consequences of military action. First of all, it is going to

be difficult. Then it might lead to Chinese intervention which probably you can also understand. But it would make India and the sub-continent a sort of an area of military contest. India is a major country; our basic interest is in seeing a strong and independent India."

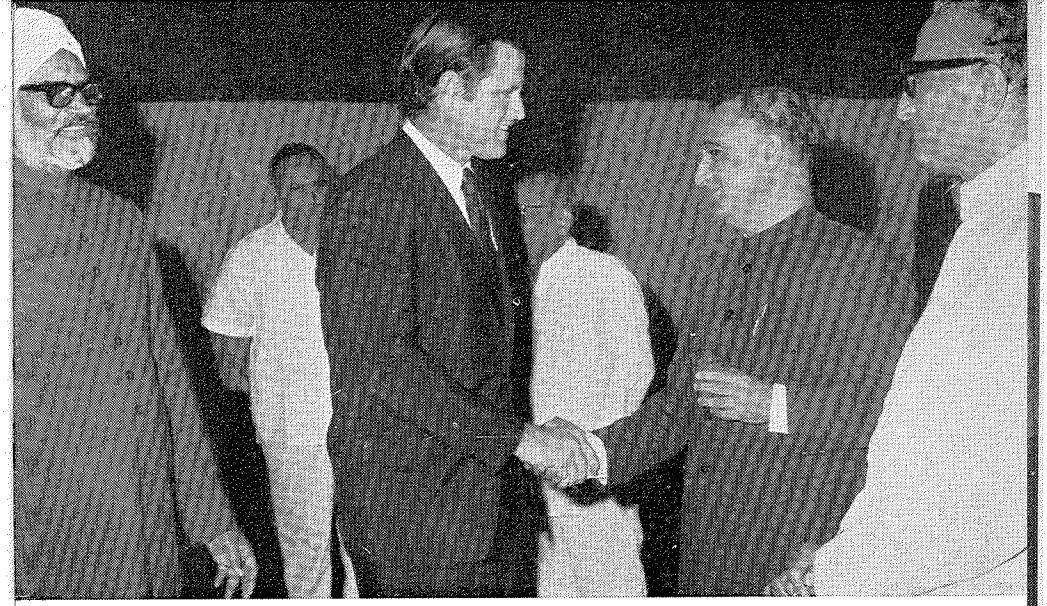
I told Kissinger I did not think there was any conflict of basic interests between India and the USA in this region and added : "After the recent elections, we have emerged as the most stable democracy in this part of the world. We were hoping to go ahead with our economic and development programme. But this burden of refugees has upset all that. We do not wish to involve ourselves in a military conflict with Pakistan. I am telling you very frankly. We have restrained ourselves and our forces from even retaliating against the violation of our air-space and land frontiers by the Pakistanis. We have a feeling that Yahya Khan and his advisers are deliberately trying to convert this freedom struggle into an Indo-Pak and Hindu-Muslim conflict, by committing atrocities on the Hindus in East Pakistan in the hope that the situation will flare up. Suppose Hindu-Muslim riots spread in India, the position of 60 million Muslims in India will become untenable. It will break the very basis of our political and social structure and Pakistan will then say : 'We told you that Hindus and Muslims are two separate nations which can never live together and that is why we drove out all the Hindus from East Bengal.' If they succeed in doing this, they hope that the West Punjabi Muslims will change the complexion, structure and population of East Pakistan so that the Bengalis do not have a majority in the whole of Pakistan and the Punjabis can continue to dominate and rule with the help of the Pathans. That may be the short-sighted thinking of the military rulers of Pakistan. Fortunately, there has not been a single communal riot or incident in India in spite of the fact that so many Hindus have been driven out of East Bengal."

Kissinger then tried to drop an indirect hint about the possible normalisation of US relations with China. He said, "We talked yesterday about our relations with Peking which are far from normal. You know they do not move from Ping-Pong diplomacy to more diplomacy. It is important for India

to understand that our differences with China relate to our relationship with the world. It is my belief that it might contribute to tranquillity in Asia if China is not so isolated. *But, under no circumstances, shall we cooperate with China, directly or indirectly, in any move which is directed against India, and any military move by China against India would retard our political relationship with China.* I say this so that we do not have another misunderstanding with India. Our relations with China, however good they might be, have nothing to do with India and, *under no circumstances, will we tolerate any anti-Indian notion.* We believe that anything that we can do with China can affect China's long-term policy, but we have still a long way to go even to arrive at the position you had with China in 1951. What we are really attempting to do is to stabilise our relations, if that is possible, and to see whether we could use this aspect of Chinese policy to produce some positive results."

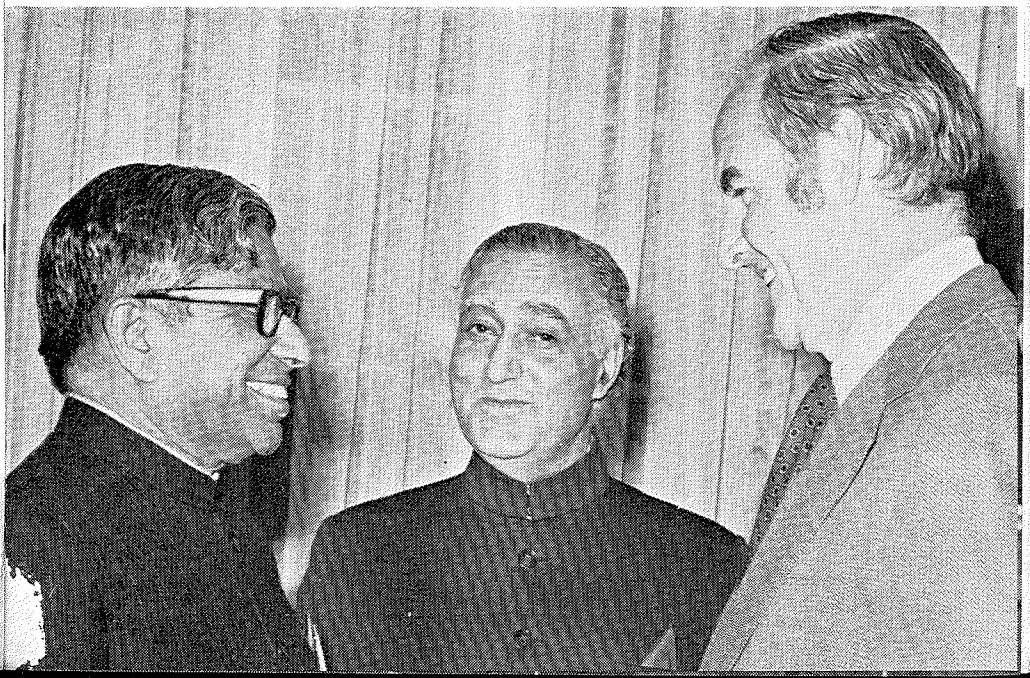
I replied : "We want normalisation of relations with China as well as America. We agree with you that the isolation of China is bad for China and this part of the world as well as for peace and security. We have no illusions that China is going to change its policy towards India overnight. We have not broken diplomatic relations with them. Our Prime Minister and other leaders have made several positive statements, but we have not found any concrete response from China. We want to keep our options too, and I believe that India and China will have to normalise their relations some time on the basis of mutual respect and mutual interest."

Kissinger answered : "Yes. This is a basic thrust of our policy also. But you have more experience in dealing with China. I mentioned this matter so that as things develop, I can talk about it, either with your Ambassador or with anyone else you say." I replied : "You must appreciate that we have a threat from China which we cannot ignore." Kissinger answered : "Of course." I added : "Almost two-thirds of our forces are actually tied up along the Chinese border. China is the main threat to us. After 1962, we cannot afford to take any risks. And yet Pakistan makes the charge that we are armed to the teeth against them."



Author receiving Senator Edward Kennedy in New Delhi, after latter's return from visit to Bangla Desh Refugee Camp

Senator McGowan, Author and C. Subramaniam (Minister Finance)
Indian Embassy, Washington 1976

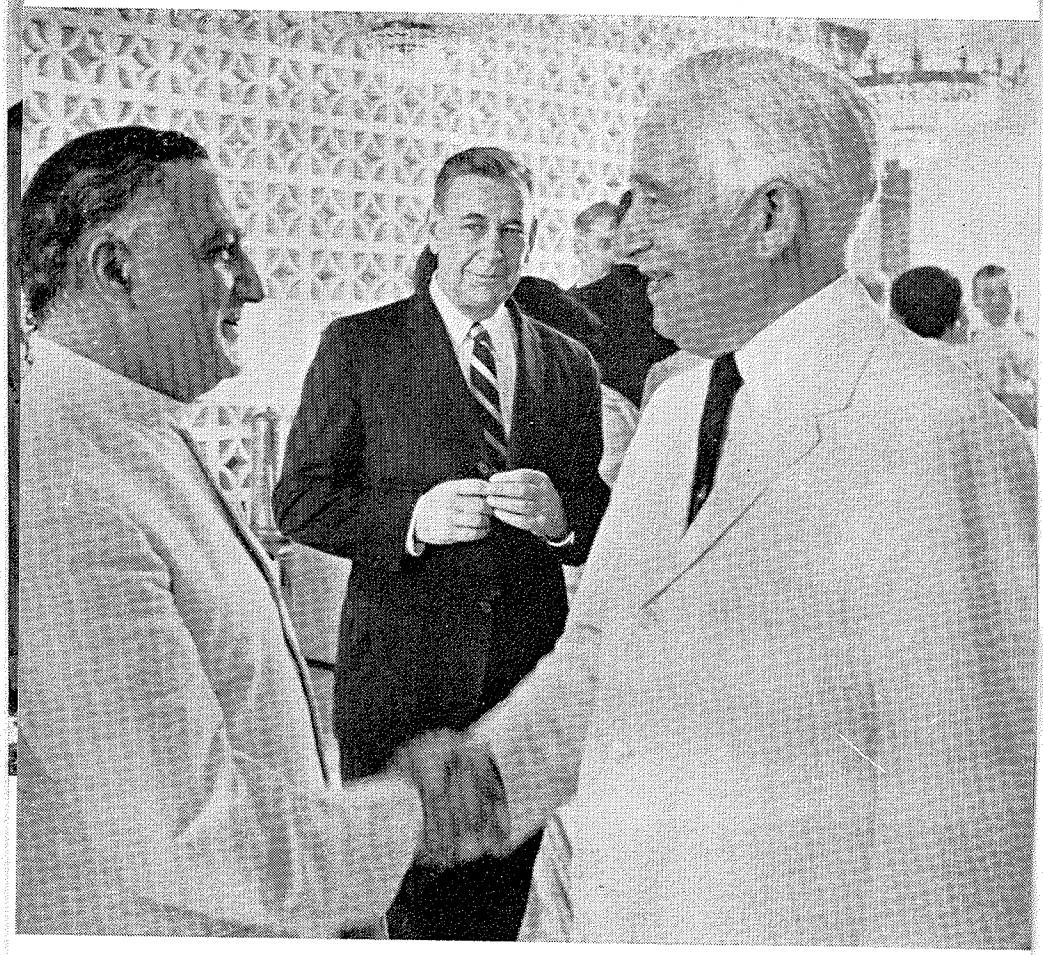


Author with Chinese Ambassador at the Indian Embassy Dinner, Washington

Author with President Ho Chi Minh and Premier Pham Van Dong, Hanoi 1952

Author shaking hands with Premier Kosygin of USSR

Foreign Minister Swaran Singh, Prime Minister Shastri, Defence Minister Chavan & Author at the Tashkent Conference, January 1966



Author & U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Keating at US Embassy, New Delhi 1971

Author at Virginia University Faculty Luncheon for him

Kissinger answered in his usual manner : "Even if we had the maximum conceivable or inconceivable improvement of relations with China, no one can believe the people who made the Long March, who fought the United States when they (China) had just emerged from their civil war. They are a formidable country with lamentably aggressive tendencies. Regardless of what question arises and under what circumstances, we do not believe that one can afford to lay down one's guard under the maximum conceivable circumstances. *Your military dispositions do not seem unreasonable to us.*"

I asked Kissinger : "What is your assessment of Soviet policy in this region?" He replied : "I had the impression after talking to Soviet diplomats that their attitude towards India and Pakistan is rather the same as ours. They would like a political solution and they do not want a war. At least they say so. It may be that their interests are not so different from ours. As regards India, they would favour the Communist Party of India more than the pro-Chinese Communist Party of India. This is all they want—to prevent Chinese domination in this area."

I asked Kissinger : "Does the prevention of Chinese domination and expansionism in this area conflict with your interest in this region?" *Kissinger replied* : "*Listen, under no conceivable circumstances, would we fail to oppose the Chinese domination in this area.* Under no conceivable circumstances, even under the US—China rapprochement would we tolerate that. *We want a strong independent India, independent of China's domination.*"

I said : "I think, therefore, a political settlement in East Bengal is very essential and urgent. If it does not come about, I am afraid China's influence in East Bengal will increase." Kissinger replied, "You know it would be a folly for the US to favour a situation in which 800 million Chinese and 600 million people in this sub-continent would form a group—a class dominated from Peking—that would be inconceivable. That would be a price that under no circumstances we would pay. Rapprochement with China would be meaningless if that is the price one has to pay for it. It would be surrender. About this, you should never have any doubts."

I asked Kissinger : "In that context do you think it is possible to persuade Yahya Khan to have a peaceful settlement on a plan that may be acceptable to the people and the elected leaders of East Bengal?" Kissinger evaded a direct reply and said he would "have a better judgement of that after I have been to Islamabad. I have not yet talked to Yahya Khan." I reminded Kissinger that Tikka Khan had met him in Washington and asked what was his assessment. He replied that Tikka Khan's assessment was that Yahya Khan and his advisers are unlikely to have any kind of political settlement with the Awami League. I told Kissinger that perhaps they thought they could carry on for the next 5-6 months and added: "And the impression may be gaining ground in some countries that if Pakistan can hold on for another 5-6 months, then conditions would stabilise. Our assessment is that the longer the political settlement is delayed, the greater will be the resistance movement and the more difficult the solution of the problem." Kissinger answered: "That is true."

I said: "We are not planning military action. But economically things will get worse in East Bengal by the beginning of September. The *amman* crop is the main crop there. It is sown in March or April and harvested in the beginning of September. Hardly 10 to 30 per cent of the area has been sown this year because of the disturbances. And when the harvest does not come in, there is going to be a larger influx of refugees into India—not only of the Hindus but of Muslims as well. It would be a terrific problem which we cannot handle and we will have to stop the further movement of refugees."

Kissinger asked: "How would you stop it?" I replied: "One way is that these freedom fighters, students, younger people, etc. will probably try to go into East Bengal and liberate certain areas and if they succeed, then the refugees can be pushed back into those areas. This is being talked about by them. I am saying that not to support them but this is their idea. And that is why we are anxious that some progress should be made towards a political solution before the beginning of September. I would say even earlier. It is for the elected leaders of the Awami League to say whether there is any possibility of a political settlement. Whether it is a loose confederation, or the Six-Point formula or regional

autonomy, whatever it is, it is for them to sort out with the Pakistani leaders. *We are not interested in what type of settlement it is as long as it is acceptable to the elected leaders of East Bengal.*"

Kissinger then talked about the desirability of maintaining direct contacts with me and Haksar and I told him that our Ambassador had our full confidence and he could pass on whatever messages were necessary through him. He said that he would call him as soon as he got back and brief him about his talks in Pakistan.

Thus ended our conversation of an hour and a half. I leave it to the reader to judge for himself whether Kissinger was speaking the truth or only trying to be too clever by half and hoodwink us. It was an informal personal talk not to be recorded on any official files and one would have expected him to be a little more honest and frank than usual, but that is not Kissinger's method of diplomacy. Even his admirers and biographers, Bernard and Marvin Kalb, have admitted, in this context, that Kissinger 'clearly shaded the truth to satisfy the needs of policy', and mentioned 'Henry's insensitivity to the human factor in foreign policy equations'.

6

The Struggle In Bangla Desh

Recent history has shown that developing countries like India and Pakistan can best resolve their differences peacefully and bilaterally without any outside intervention. Outside intervention in the past has not only sharpened differences but also made them even more difficult to resolve. When a bilateral problem between two neighbouring developing countries becomes the bone of contention in the Great Power rivalry and the Cold War, the real issues are taken out of their context and unduly magnified.

This has been the sad story of Indo-Pak relations since 1947. A ray of hope appeared after the 1965 conflict and the Tashkent Agreement of 1966. However, the strained relations between India and China after the 1962 conflict and China's attempts to support Pakistan against India complicated the situation. It was further compounded by the partisan attitude of America.

During the first part of the Nixon-Kissinger period, 1969-1972, the US tilt against India and towards Pakistan had been operating under the surface through clandestine supply of arms to Pakistan in spite of the US ban. The so-called 'one-time exception' was in fact neither one-time nor an exception. I recall an informal conversation with a senior counsellor of the State Department in 1969 when he bluntly warned me, "the Pakistan Army is far superior to the Indian Army; one Pakistani soldier is equal to ten Indians; the next war between India and Pakistan will result in a Pakistani victory over India and India's dismemberment." I told him politely but firmly that I hoped such a contingency would not

arise but if it did, the American assessment would be proved wrong.

When I met Henry Kissinger in his Basement Office at the White House in the summer of 1969, he was more diplomatic, cautious and careful than the counsellor. He talked mainly about Vietnam, and expressed his appreciation of India's efforts in helping to find a peaceful solution of the Vietnam problem. At that time he had not yet started his flirtations with Peking and spoke strongly against China's attempts to disrupt peace in Indochina and on the Indian sub-continent. He denied that the US was giving any arms to Pakistan and declared that America had much closer affinity with a democratic even though non-aligned India than with a military dictatorship in Pakistan. He went so far as to express appreciation of the Soviet Union's positive and helpful attitude in the Vietnam confrontation. His main anxiety, at that time, seemed to be that India should not criticise the US policy towards Vietnam in public. This was understandable because American public opinion was very critical of Nixon's Vietnam policy.

I told Kissinger that we would be glad to be of any help in bringing America and Vietnam into direct contact. He showed some interest. But Nixon seemed to be certain that he could force the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to come to terms with the South through military pressure.

It is not my intention to write in great detail about the Vietnam problem and how, in spite of the Christmas carpet bombing in December 1972, the Nixon policy in Vietnam failed. I have dealt with this question elsewhere (see *India, China and Indochina*). My main purpose here is to show how and why the US policy towards India, during this Nixon-Kissinger period, developed from an ostensibly 'neutral' attitude to an open 'tilt'.

Kissinger paid a short visit to Delhi in July 1971. His main thesis was that India and the USA were much closer, as the world's two largest democracies, than any other two countries.

We realised, however, that Kissinger was looking at the Indo-Pak question not on its merits but in the wider perspective of America's rivalry with and hostility towards

the Soviet Union and the possibility of a detente with China. Although he did not give any direct hint of his forthcoming secret pilgrimage to Peking via Pakistan, we had information from sources in Geneva and elsewhere that such a visit was contemplated. G. Parthasarathy had been told about it in Geneva by Edgar Snow on July 7 and mentioned it to us the next day when he arrived in Delhi.

According to a verbatim record of my conversation with Kissinger, it was evident that he was trying to pull the wool over our eyes, both vis-a-vis Pakistan and China (See Chapter V). I am not blaming Kissinger for having kept his Peking visit a secret from us because it was perhaps necessary for him to do so as he was not sure how it would end and partly because he was obliged to Pakistan for arranging it.

However, the game was much deeper. It was not because Pakistan had acted as a channel of communication between Washington and Peking that Nixon and Kissinger felt obliged to 'tilt' towards Pakistan. The fact was that in order to start a detente with China, Nixon and Kissinger felt that friendship between India and the US was expendable, while a tilt towards Pakistan would be helpful. American and Chinese policies seemed to converge on these two grounds apart from their common hostility towards the Soviet Union. Any hopes that we might have entertained for improving relations with the USA seemed far-fetched and not practical in the circumstances. The US Administration subordinated regional problems and interests to its global policy objectives. It became even more anti-Indian with Nixon's decision to seek detente with China. Pakistan used this development and exploited the cold war and its military alliances against India.

Independently of this development, we had been in close consultation with Moscow about the desirability of solemnising our already existing friendly relations in the form of an Indo-Soviet Treaty. Talks had been going on about this at my and the Ambassador's level from 1969 onwards. Such a treaty was in harmony with the national interests of India as well as of the Soviet Union. It was all the more necessary in view of Pakistan's growing collusion with China against India, and the US tilt. But that was not the main purpose or motivation of the Treaty. The prime objective was to strengthen

relations with a reliable friend such as the Soviet Union whose reliability had been proved in times of need. But this did not debar either country from developing friendly relations with third countries. The Treaty was and is a long term arrangement and not something done for tactical reasons. It is valid for twenty years.

When Pakistan started its military terror in East Pakistan from 25 March, 1965 onwards, hundreds of thousands of Muslim and non-Muslim refugees from East Pakistan started pouring daily into the adjoining states of India. A grave situation was created. It upset not only the economic, the administrative and the law and order situation in these adjoining States, but also produced grave danger of communal riots in India. The people in the adjoining states of India had widespread sympathy for their suffering brethren of East Bengal; India could not remain unconcerned about the situation. India gave moral, material and political support to the Bangala Deshis and pleaded with various Governments including friends and allies of Pakistan, to persuade President Yahya Khan to bring about a political settlement of the problem with Sheikh Mujib and the already elected leaders of East Pakistan.

Kissinger for once is right when he says that I told the US Ambassador in New Delhi, Kenneth Keating, in the middle of March 1971 that "India wanted Pakistan to remain united." He forgets, however to add that I also said to Keating that we had no designs on any part of Pakistan but if Pakistan did not find a peaceful political solution, it might erupt into a holocaust that would be difficult to control. Kissinger also omits to mention that after the massacre of East Bengalis by the West Pakistan military forces in Dacca on the night of 25 March, 1971 and the arrest of Sheikh Mujib, I warned Keating that unless Mujib was released and Yahya started negotiations with him, the situation would deteriorate and get beyond Pakistan's control. He also does not mention that we repeatedly requested the US to exercise her influence to get Sheikh Mujib released and to persuade Pakistan not to provoke Hindu-Muslim riots or transgress across our borders.

We did not speak about "Pakistan's humiliation perhaps trying to spread the centrifugal tendencies from East to West

Pakistan," as Kissinger accuses us; on the contrary, we adopted a very restrained posture and pleaded that the Pakistan Government should guarantee the return of refugees to their homes in East Pakistan with honour and safety. Kissinger goes on to say, "When the United States agreed to assume the major cost of refugee relief, India switched to insisting that the refugee problem was insoluble without a political settlement." We did not switch our stand but had been urging from the very beginning that without a political settlement, the refugees would not return to East Pakistan because they were afraid of reprisals by the West Pakistani military forces. This stand proved correct when after the liberation of Bangladesh, almost all the refugees numbering 10 million returned to their homes in Bangla Desh, because the West Pakistani military forces were not in power to commit further atrocities on them. For an intellectual like Kissinger to brush this valid argument aside and impute ulterior motives to India, is the height of hypocrisy. I wonder how America would have reacted if a similar situation had been created across her borders say, in Canada or in Mexico ! If Kissinger thought that the Government and the people of India would be satisfied by American doles of refugee relief, he was underestimating the gravity of the situation and the strong feelings both in India and in Bangla Desh, and ignoring the human aspect of the problem.

Not being satisfied with perverting India's stand, Kissinger goes on to say, "In May 1971 we learned from sources heretofore reliable that Mrs Gandhi had ordered plans for a lightning 'Israeli type' attack to take over East Pakistan." I categorically contradict this statement. The fact was that Mrs Gandhi was trying her best for a political solution negotiated directly between Yahya Khan and Sheikh Mujib or their already elected representatives and not encouraging the Indian Parliament, the Indian Government or the Indian commanders to embark on a 'lightning Israeli type attack over East Pakistan'. Instead of appreciating India's restraint and correcting the anti-India tilt, Kissinger is only adding insult to injury by his insinuations. American 'sources' have been proved unreliable and incorrect in the past in many parts of the world, and one wonders, whether there was any such a 'heretofore reliable

source' or whether one was not invented by Kissinger or the CIA and words put into his mouth to suit the Nixon-Kissinger premise at that time.

According to the 'Hindu', Madras, of November 30, 1979, its correspondent in Washington, N. RAVI, had a telephonic conversation with Tom Powers, author of *The Man Who Kept the Secrets—Richard Helms and the CIA*. Powers told him : "My impression is that it was not a Cabinet Member but somebody with an administrative position in the Cabinet." The impression given by a deliberate leak from the White House in 1971 and Nixon's revelation to David Frost in early 1978 was that the informant was a Minister of the Indian Cabinet. So much for the reliability of Kissinger's sources. We are more concerned about the truth and substance of the allegation. As I have said already, there was absolutely no truth in it. Actually, it was Yahya Khan who embarked on a 'lightning Israeli type attack' on nine airfields in North and West India from his western wing on 3 December, 1971 at 6 p.m., not India.

Kissinger lets the cat out of the bag when he says, "On May 28, Nixon sent letters to both Mrs Gandhi and Yahya Khan outlining our policy. *The letter to Yahya was not exactly strong;* it reflected our need for Yahya as a channel to Peking."

Kissinger admits, "I was convinced that East Pakistan would eventually become independent. Our policy was to give the facts time to assert themselves." I doubt whether the first sentence correctly reflected Kissinger's thinking at that time or is merely an afterthought. Be that as it may, Kissinger forgets to mention how much time he thought was necessary 'for the facts to assert themselves'. This was revealed to us during Mrs Gandhi's visit to Washington at the beginning of November 1971. We were told that, in the American view, about two years would be needed for a political peaceful settlement to be brought about. In the meantime, the US Administration expected India to accept tens of thousands of refugees from East Bengal daily and remain satisfied and grateful for the food packets and clothing that America was sending to India—to clothe and feed the refugees.

Kissinger gives credit to Yahya for announcing on June 28, 1971 'a plan to transfer political power to civilians'. Kissinger

seems to forget that Yahya's plan was no more than appointing a puppet civilian as Governor of East Pakistan without conceding the six-point formula for autonomy as the elected leaders of Bangla Desh were demanding. Kissinger's perfect sense of timing, which he displayed with such skill during his shuttle diplomacy and the first Disengagement Agreement in the Egyptian-Israeli Conflict of 1973, was completely missing during the Bangla Desh crisis. Commenting on this in his column of November 13, 1979 in the 'Washington Post', Jack Anderson has said : "Thus Kissinger, with even smoother obfuscation than Nixon achieved in his memoirs, revives an eight-year-old lie."

Referring to his visit to New Delhi in July 1971, Kissinger admits : "I had two partially contradictory missions. One was to prepare India circumspectly for the news of my visit to China. Noting the Ping-Pong diplomacy and our two-year record of overtures in trade and travel, I stressed that we were bound to continue to improve our relations with Peking. On the other hand, we would take a grave view of an unprovoked Chinese attack on India. If this unsolicited comment did not utterly mystify my interlocutors, it may have given them a brief moment of encouragement, though that moment of euphoria surely ended with the July 15 announcement of my trip to China". This is a specimen of Kissingers 'double-dealing, double-talk and double-think'.

Kissinger is being deliberately naive if he means what he says in this statement. We were not so naive as to take Kissinger at his word. We had experience of the past 20 years to go by. We had no illusions about the US Administration's benevolence in this matter, even on humanitarian grounds. It is interesting that Kissinger later (after his return from Peking) told our Ambassador that if China intervened in the Indo-Pak conflict, America would not be in a position to do anything about it. This is contrary to what he had said to us before his visit to Peking. If his previous statement was made to assuage our feelings, it did not succeed. And if his later statement was meant to frighten us, it did not succeed either. We were not 'mystified' by Kissinger's statement nor taken in by it. He is a suave, clever and cunning diplomat, but it never pays to be that in the long run. Modern diplomacy must have some

basis of honesty and sincerity, otherwise it loses all credibility. And 'credibility' was what was lacking in Kissinger's diplomacy.

This is perhaps where Kissinger over-estimated his ability to fool others and underestimated the perspicacity of others. Kissinger is a phrase-monger. He plays with words as if they were pellets to be fired from an air-gun to frighten children or balloons to be floated in the sky to test other people's reaction. He does not understand the mind of Asia and the sensitivities and sensibilities of Asians. He mistook the patience, restraint and perseverance of India as a sign of weakness and decadence. He understands and respects only strength and therefore concedes to the Chinese and the Japanese some measure of 'realism and farsightedness'. But he denies it to the other Asians. I do not wish to psycho-analyse Henry Kissinger. That is a task for people better qualified, but I must point out his deliberate misrepresentation of facts.

He says, "I invited Mrs Gandhi to visit the United States for a fundamental review of Indian-American relations with President Nixon. But Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers were in no mood for conciliation. The invitation to Washington was evaded." This is just not true. Mrs Gandhi could naturally not go out of India at that ime because of the internal political situation and the external threat. But she did visit Washington, London, Paris, Brussels, Vienna and Bonn in October-November 1971, in view of the deteriorating situation on our borders with East Pakistan, and in her anxiety and hope to be able to persuade the Western friends of Pakistan to urge Yahya Khan to release Mujib for a political settlement with him. Instead of appreciating this, Kissinger has only tried to blame Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers. This is characteristic of Super Power arrogance from which pseudo-intellectuals like Henry Kissinger suffered. They expected the whole world to go down on their knees before the American Secretary of State or President. They refused to understand or appreciate the internal and external compulsions in another democratic country like India. They resented statements of facts which may imply aberrations of American policy, e.g., the shipment of arms to Pakistan, in spite of the ban imposed in 1965 which

Mrs Gandhi and her Ministers raised with Kissinger during his 1971 Delhi visit.

Kissinger's criticism of the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty signed on August 9, 1971 is quite contrary to what he told me and others later. He calls it "A Bombshell about which we first learned from the newspapers." Did he expect India to seek the previous approval of the US Administration, or at least inform it before signing the Treaty? Did the US Administration ever reciprocate in such matters towards India? This reveals Kissinger's real appreciation (?) of India's policy of independence and non-alignment.

Apart from this, Kissinger's assessment of the Treaty as given in his book *The White House Years* is rather interesting. It is at complete variance with the assessment he gave me in July 1971 and, when I was Ambassador to the USA from 1973-76, and also during his talks with the Indian Cabinet Ministers during his visit to India in October 1974. He told me then that America not only understood but also appreciated India's policy of non-alignment. America did not mind India's friendship with the Soviet Union and did not consider that the Indo-Soviet Treaty violated or went against India's policy of non-alignment. India, according to him, was not a small country that could be dominated or dictated to by any Great or Super Power, including the USSR. But that was not the real Kissinger speaking to me, or was it?

It is difficult to say who or what the real Kissinger is. He seems to shift his stand, his ground and his premise, from time to time, to suit his point of view in a particular situation. He is a past master at coining new phrases, in putting old discredited ideas in new words which can have more than one meaning, so that he may be able to interpret them according to his convenience in a given situation. One is, therefore, inclined to take what he says with a pinch of salt.

However, one has to take him by what he says about the Soviet-Indian Friendship Treaty in his latest book. He writes, "Its bland provisions could not obscure its strategic significance . . . . the two parties pledged to consult regularly on major international problems affecting both sides." So far so good. One need not quarrel with him on this. No important agreement betweent two sovereign, independent, friendly

countries, neighbours of each other, like India and the USSR, can be without its strategic significance. Nor does non-alignment mean giving up its sovereign right by an independent country to consult other friendly countries on major and important problems affecting both sides. Kissinger goes on to say: "The decisive provision was Article IX, which called on the signatories to refrain from giving assistance to any third country taking part in an armed conflict with the other, and committed each side to consult immediately with a view toward taking 'appropriate effective measures' in case either party was attacked or threatened with attack." Surely any sovereign country, including a non-aligned country, has the right to refrain from giving assistance to any third country taking part in an armed conflict with a country friendly to the non-aligned country. Equally, non-alignment does not mean giving up one's sovereign right to consult with another friendly country with a view to taking appropriate effective measures when there is an attack or a threat of attack on either country. Article IX does not commit India or the Soviet Union to station the troops of one on the soil of the other or have military bases of one on the territory of the other. There is no contradiction between this Article and India's policy of non-alignment. Actually, Article IV, which Kissinger does not care to mention, expresses respect for India's policy of non-alignment as "an important factor in the maintenance of peace and international security and in the lessening of international tension."

Kissinger's conclusion "that Nehru's daughter was deliberately steering non-aligned India towards a *de facto* alliance with the Soviet Union" is wide of the mark. On the contrary, Mrs Gandhi was trying to give teeth to India's policy of non-alignment and deter countries who might have designs against India. The Treaty was well-timed in view of Pakistan's atrocities in Bangla Desh and her open threats against India and China's encouragement of her in this regard. As it turned out, the Treaty did deter China and America from direct intervention in the Indo-Pak conflict of 1971. And what was wrong with that? It is strange that Kissinger should draw a conclusion from this that the Soviet-India Friendship Treaty "objectively increased the danger of war . . . . with the Treaty Moscow threw a lighted match into a powder keg." Actually,

the Treaty prevented the Indo-Pak conflict from escalating into a Sino-Indian, Sino-Soviet or Soviet-US conflict and localised the two-week war. Strange that Kissinger should speak thus now when he did not utter a word against the Treaty previously. It is hardly fair that Kissinger should criticise India and attribute and insinuate motives to her which are not borne out by facts.

However, Kissinger does mention what L.K. Jha had told him about the Treaty that it "was not a reaction to American policy in India-Pakistan crisis but a carefully considered Indian strategy that had been in preparation for over a year." Kissinger goes on to say, "I have never understood why Jha would consider this reassuring (Dobrynin made the same point to me). I replied that, read literally, the Treaty was a matter of secondary concern, though it was hard to reconcile with India's non-alignment. What did concern us was the possibility that India might draw the conclusion that it now enjoyed freedom of action toward Pakistan .... I wanted him to understand that military intervention in East Pakistan would involve the high probability of a cut off of aid to India."

Far from encouraging India to intervene militarily in East Pakistan, the Treaty discouraged China and the USA from openly intervening on the sub-continent. It was the US Administration that sent the Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal but dared not land it in India or East Pakistan. India had already sunk a US submarine "GHAZI" given to Pakistan and Soviet sub-marines were floating under the Seventh Fleet. China made warlike noises but refrained from intervening militarily in the subcontinent.

It was Pakistan that started the war against India and not vice-versa. Kissinger conveniently forgets this. According to him, "I warned once more against trying to settle the issue by war, an evolutionary process would with our support lead to self-determination for East Bengal ...." This only insults the intelligence of Indians and Bangla Deshis whom Kissinger and Nixon expected perhaps to wait until their support to the so-called 'evolutionary process' would lead to 'self-determination' in East Bengal. Whatever that phrase may mean to Kissinger, he reveals the real motivation when he says, "Nixon thought

that Pakistan was turning into a surrogate for Vietnam, which was being made irrelevant by the opening to China'.

Kissinger further says: "Our main difference with New Delhi lay in its demand for a pace of change that might undermine the cohesion of even West Pakistan." Yes, there was a difference about the pace of change undoubtedly. We asked for immediate release of Sheikh Mujib and a political settlement through negotiations with him but, America would give no assurance on either point. Their idea seemed to be to give Yahya Khan enough time to re-establish his control over East Pakistan, so that he could force a solution down the throats of the East Bengalis. It was this delay in taking timely action (which delay was supported by the US Administration) that almost undermined the cohesion of West Pakistan, and not India's plea to hasten the pace. Kissinger's conclusion in this regard is not only not borne out by facts but is clearly biased and prejudiced against India.

7

America and India

Kissinger accuses the State Department under Rogers to have been "heavily influenced by its traditional Indian bias". That is just not true. The State Department was never biased in favour of India. It did show some realism and objectivity during President Kennedy's short regime and during the Bangla Desh crisis. It was President Nixon who was traditionally biased against India. Kissinger gave a cover of verbosity and philosophic hypocrisy to this bias which was soon exposed. Had Kissinger not been prejudiced against India and intoxicated with his blatant belief in the effectiveness of brute force, he would have found a strong ally in the State Department to strengthen his hands to give correct advice to Nixon during the Bangla Desh crisis. It is hard to believe that a man with Kissinger's ability and intelligence would have blindly carried out Nixon's policy of the tilt, against strong public opinion in the USA, in the US Congress and in the State Department, had he not himself believed in it. He is merely trying to justify Nixon and himself by shifting the blame to the State Department. This is typical of Kissinger who is reluctant to accept his mistake and keen to find scape-goats for his own failure. He brushes aside, with his usual contempt and arrogance, the assessment made by the US Consul General, Blood, in Dacca as well as the recommendation of the US Ambassador, Keating in New Delhi.

Kissinger chooses to forget American history and America's own record during the American Revolution, the American Civil War, Wilson's Fourteen-Point Formula during World War I, Wendel Wilkie's plea for One World and Franklin

Roosevelt's Declaration about the Four Freedoms, when he criticises the Indian Parliament for declaring its whole-hearted 'sympathy and support' for the Bangla Deshis (not Bengalis, as Kissinger calls them). He applies double standards to the freedom struggle in Bangla Desh, including the attitude of India towards it, and the support given by the USA in its short history to some Freedom Movements, like that of India.

I wonder how Nixon and Kissinger would have reacted to a similar situation in their own neighbourhood, as India was facing in Bangla Desh. We know that in Cuba, in Chile, and elsewhere in Latin America and the Carribean, in parts of Africa, West Asia, South East Asia and the Far East, America has gone out of its way to support military regimes that were opposed to the interests of the people of these countries and regions. Chiang Kai-Shek in Formosa, Syngman Rhee in South Korea, Thieu in South Vietnam, Lon Nol and Sirik Matak in Cambodia, Phoumi Nosavan in Laos, Yahya Khan in Pakistan are a few examples of the failure of American policy in Asia. One need not quote other instances in Africa and Latin America to substantiate this point. The real crux of the matter is that while the US Administration does not hesitate to use military force, political and economic pressure, subversion and sabotage to destabilise Governments and countries that do not toe its line, people like Kissinger have the audacity and arrogance to misinterpret, distort and criticise India's role in Bangla Desh. No sensible statesman would be taken in by the deliberate distortion of facts by Kissinger to justify Nixon's policy towards India, Pakistan and Bangla Desh during the 1971 conflict. No wonder Mrs Gandhi, as Prime Minister of India, told Kissinger and Nixon where they got off. This was necessary in the national interest of India as well as of peace in the sub-continent. But for it, Nixon and Kissinger might have succeeded in suppressing the freedom struggle in Bangla Desh and propping up Yahya Khan's military dictatorship. Nixon, particularly, had a soft corner for Yahya Khan and Kissinger had been developing the same feeling because of the channel that Pakistan provided to Peking. No wonder Nixon approved Kissinger's recommendation of May 2, and added a hand-written note: "To all

hands. Don't squeeze Yahya Khan at this time." It was the very time when pressure on Yahya Khan would have worked towards a political settlement in East Bengal.

Instead of admitting the failure of his and Nixon's policy, Kissinger explains it away by mentioning the 'three obstacles': "The policy of Indians, our own public debate and the indiscipline of our bureaucracy." He cannot deny that "the burden of refugees was indeed monumental ; the danger of communal riots should not be dismissed." But he jumps to the conclusion that "As weeks passed, we began increasingly to suspect that Mrs Gandhi perceived a larger opportunity. As Pakistan grew more and more isolated internationally, she appeared to seek, above all, Pakistan's humiliation, perhaps trying to spread the centrifugal tendencies from East to West Pakistan." Kissinger has a suspicious mind and fertile imagination. He seems to regret that in spite of American and Chinese support, Yahya Khan failed to keep East Pakistan under his heel. Subsequent events have shown how wrong Nixon and Kissinger were in their assessment of the realities on the sub-continent, and in their policy to prop up a military dictator who could not have lasted on his own.

Kissinger tries to drive a wedge between Mrs Gandhi and the Indian military commanders when he says : "We learnt that Indian military commanders thought Mrs Gandhi's proposal of an attack on East Pakistan was too risky. . . . The Indian commanders insisted, at the minimum, for waiting until November when weather in the Himalayas would make Chinese intervention more difficult." As a member of the *team* which considered the situation in Bangla Desh every day during those historical weeks and months, I can say without fear of contradiction that there was absolutely no difference of opinion between the military commanders and Mrs Gandhi. We did not want to attack East Pakistan and that is why, in spite of Yahya Khan's provocation across the border and in our air space, we tried to localise the incidents and did not launch an attack on East Pakistan which we would have been justified to do in the circumstances. It was Mrs Gandhi's wise leadership that was responsible for this. The civilian advisers and the military commanders were at one. We were all agreed

on the tactics and strategy that were followed by us all at that time.

Kissinger tries hard to pay me a dubious compliment when he says : "T.N. Kaul, the Foreign Secretary, who venomously pushed the policy of confrontation in 1971, was sent to Washington as Ambassador with the assignment to repair relations, a task to which he devoted himself with the same single-mindedness that had characterised India's implacable dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971." I wish I could return the compliment. There was no venom either in the minor role I played in 1971 during the Bangla Desh crisis, nor in my single-mindedness, during my assignment to repair relations with the USA when I went there as Indian Ambassador from 1973 to 1976. I do not wish to give a personal colour to this book and reserve my comments on my role as Indian Ambassador to the USA. Suffice it to say here that we all—civil and military alike—followed the policy laid down by our Government with 'single-mindedness' but without any 'venom' either against Pakistan or the USA.

Kissinger forgets that, in spite of the internal and external difficulties at that time, Mrs Gandhi undertook a two-week journey to America and the West only to persuade friends and allies of Pakistan to bring pressure on Yahya Khan to release Sheikh Mujib and bring about a political settlement in Bangla Desh through negotiations. Mrs Gandhi did not recognise the Government and independence of Bangla Desh, until December 6, 1971, i.e., two days after Pakistan declared war against India. India did not use war or black-mail, as the Kissinger-Nixon Administration did, during this and other crises. Suspension of US aid to India, the foray of the Seventh Fleet task force into the Bay of Bengal, the unsolicited comment by Kissinger that the US would not intervene if China embarked on a military attack in the region of India, are a few examples of Kissingerian tactics to frighten non-aligned developing countries, even countries with the size and potential of India.

The real problem in Indo-American relations after India's independence has been the attempt by the US Administration to treat India like a client State, and try to change her internal and external policies through political blackmail, military and economic pressure. There have been some sane intervals in

this period of India-US relations, as during President Kennedy's and President Johnson's brief tenures. The worst aspects of this policy came out during the Kissinger-Nixon tilt which was even worse than during Dulles' time. Unless and until both sides learn to understand each other and accept the fact that the point of view from the Yamuna and the Ganga cannot be identical with that from the Potomac and the Hudson, and unless they learn to respect each other's point of view without necessarily agreeing with it, Indo-US relations are bound to have ups and downs. However, when India is strong and stable economically, politically and militarily, America is bound to respect India's point of view and come to a realistic and mature assessment of the importance of Indo-US relations for the vital interest of both, as well as the interests of peace, progress and security in this region. But, as long as India is economically weak, her voice will not be heeded in the affluent corridors of power in the USA.

There are many similarities between the short history of the USA and the long history of India. America in the early years of her Independence, like India, was non-aligned towards the conflicts going on in other parts of the world. The ideals which have been cherished throughout the history and cultural ethos of India are similar to those that inspired the American war of Independence. The difference, however, is that the USA is a much larger country with a relatively smaller population than India's. She had over a century in which she improved the economic conditions of her people before she introduced equal rights for all her citizens and universal suffrage by secret ballot. India, on the other hand, had her political revolution before she had her social and economic revolution. Even today, India is still going through her social and economic revolution. She introduced universal suffrage and secret ballot immediately on attaining political independence in 1947. Americans must appreciate and understand these similarities as well as differences. India is not a country that can be taken for granted, trifled with, dominated or pressurised into toeing any other country's line. India is a potentially great power with vast natural and human resources. She has the third largest number of scientists and technologists in the world. She occupies an important strategic

position in Asia. To try to cut her down to size by propping up Pakistan, or encouraging China to dominate this region, or by trying to drive a wedge between India and the Soviet Union, will not succeed, as it has not done so far.

India and America, together with the Soviet Union and the other countries in this region, could play a positve, constructive and progressive role in reducing tension, conflict and threats of war. Great and Super Power military rivalry cannot be a lasting or enduring state of affairs in the world. One can understand ideological and economic rivalry in a world where different political, social and economic system co-exist, but they must not be allowed to violate the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political and economic independence of other countries.

The US policy in this region has to reconcile itself to the realities of the present situation and its future projections; only then can the US expect a positive response from countries such as India. The present trend, which was started during the Kissinger-Nixon detente with China and embodied in the Shanghai communique in 1972 seems to be to treat this region as an appendage of China and falling within her sphere of influence. This policy will not be and cannot be accepted by any self-respecting sovereign country in this region.

Sino-Soviet differences are there and likely to continue for some more time until the leadership of China reconciles itself to the realities in Asia. Attempts to exploit these differences and treating the other countries of this region as pawns on the political chess-board will not succeed in the long run. The only way in which peace and security, progress and development can come about in this region is through mutual cooperation, mutual understanding and mutual respect on the basis of the sovereign equality of nations, in a spirit of equal partnership rather than through the intervention of outside powers or their domination over these countries.

The Simla Agreement was an effort in this direction by attempting to resolve bilateral problems peacefully and bilaterally without outside intervention. Vietnamising the peace rather than Vietnamising the war could also have brought about a peaceful settlement in Vietnam. The mutual suspi-

cions among the three Indochina States on the one side and the ASEAN on the other can also be resolved peacefully through consultations between the two sides rather than by the intervention of outside Great Powers. I have dealt with this subject elsewhere (*India, China and Indochina*) and do not wish to dilate on it at length here.

My main purpose in writing this book is to project the point of view of India and the hopes and aspirations of the people of this region in order to help bring about an understanding which could be conducive to the peace, progress and security of this region as well as the world. India would like to see an area of peace and cooperation in South and South-East Asia, extending to South-West Asia, the Gulf and the Indian Ocean area. India's natural role is to become a bridge of understanding between these sub-regions. America's global and regional interests can and must be harmonised and reconciled with this goal. The days of gun-boat diplomacy and the doctrines of balance of power and the Great Powers spheres of influence are no longer valid today. The sooner this is realised by all the better for peace and development. India does not want to be the 'dominant' power in this region but wants to act on the basis of sovereign equality of nations in a spirit of partnership.

8

"Mrs Gandhi Goes to Washington"

Past efforts to bring India and America to a closer understanding of each other's problems and view-points have not borne the results that were expected. Prime Minister Nehru's visit to the USA in 1949 could not achieve much because the two sides were talking on different wave-lengths and turning their antenae to different frequencies. America at that time looked at India through British eyes. And Britain had not quite recovered from the hangover of its past imperialist glory. Eisenhower visited India in 1956. His visit created a very good impression and aroused great enthusiasm but it was based more on sentimental and emotional euphoria than on a mutuality of interests and outlook. Nehru's visit to the United Nations and the USA in 1960 presented a contrast between India's national, regional and global policies and those of the USA. Jacqueline Kennedy's visit to India in 1961 was a great success mainly because there was greater similarity of approach between the two countries and Governments at that time. This improvement could and might have been maintained but for Kennedy's assassination. President Johnson was a tough Texan who looked at things differently. However, relations continued on an even keel during his Presidency. His tough policy on Vietnam prevented him from running for Presidentship in 1968 when Nixon achieved a narrow victory over Humphrey.

From then on, started a deep decline in Indo- American relations, resulting in Nixon's famous tilt against India. India's increasing friendship with the Soviet Union, Indira Gandhi's electoral victories in February-March, 1971, the developments in Bangla Desh, differences over Vietnam, attempts by Kissinger and Nixon to indulge in gun-boat diplomacy by sending the

Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal were some of the symptoms of the increasing estrangement between the Government of India and the US Administration.

Mrs Gandhi made a last-minute effort to try to put across India's point of view to America and the Western countries during October-November, 1971. Britain and France appreciated our point of view and, in spite of Nixon's pressure, refrained from siding with America against India. Belgium's attitude was almost similar. Bonn and Vienna were more sympathetic towards India, but could not do anything to convince Nixon. The main stumbling block to a political settlement of the Bangla Desh problem through peaceful negotiations between Mujib and Yahya Khan was the stubborn attitude of the latter and the support he expected and received from the Chinese and the US Administrations. In spite of this Mrs Gandhi decided to pay a visit to Washington.

Kissinger in his book says : "We considered Indian and American long-term interest as congruent." Kissinger is fond of using uncommon and high-sounding words and phrases to express simple things in order to make them look complex. According to its dictionary meaning, the word 'congruent' is defined as : "two numbers which, when divided by the same number give the same remainder." America and India were divided by a few issues, e.g., Vietnam, Bangla Desh, Indo-Soviet Friendship, India's policy of non-alignment. The biggest dividing factor was, however, the Nixon-Kissinger policy of trying to dominate other countries and dictate to them. The remainder left by the division of India's and Nixon's policy was an apparently unbridgeable gap. However, with foresight, mutual respect and mutual understanding this gap could have been bridged. Mrs Gandhi's visit to America in November 1971 provided an opportunity. But for reasons known only to Kissinger and Nixon, the latter did not make any move to grasp the hand of friendship that was extended to him by Mrs Gandhi. On the contrary, he took Mrs Gandhi's friendly remarks as an affront to his omniscience and omnipotence.

Whatever advice Kissinger might have given to Nixon on August 25, Septemder 11 and October 8, 1971, it did not produce any tangible effect on Nixon's thinking. Kissinger says : "We accepted autonomy (of East Pakistan) as inevitable

and independence as probable, a war was senseless ; Bangla Desh would come into being by the spring of 1972 if present procedures were given a chance. We differed over method, not aim." He goes on to say : "On October 7, I told a WSAG (Washington Special Action Group) meeting that if India would accept an evolutionary process, it would achieve most of its objectives with our assistance. If they cooperate with us, we could work with them on 90 per cent ef their problems, like releasing Mujib or attaining some degree of autonomy for Bangla Desh, and these steps would lead eventually to their getting it all." Kissinger is a past master in the art of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. Neither he nor Nixon ever gave any indication to Mrs Gandhi or her aides in November 1971 that Mujib would be released or negotiations would be held with him or any time-table for Bangla Desh attaining 'autonomy' or independence. May be he tried to persuade Nixon—we do not know—but obviously Nixon would not bite these suggestions. He, therefore, concentrates on distorting facts in order to blame India.

For instance, he says : "India would not encourage their (refugees') return after Yahya Khan's amnesty or cooperate in stemming that flow, or permit the posting of UN personnel in the (refugee) camps to inform the refugees of the amnesty." Kissinger fails to understand or, perhaps deliberately does not want to understand, that refugees who had suffered heinous atrocities at the hands of the West Pakistani military forces in East Pakistan and were paralysed with terror, would not go back unless West Pakistani military forces were removed. Any number of UN personnel or any declaration of so-called 'amnesty' by Yahya Khan would not convince them. The only thing that could and did eventually persuade the refugees, both Hindu and Muslim, to go back to their homes in Bangla Desh was the return of Sheikh Mujib and the persuasion of his Government to assure the refugees safe and honourable return to their homes.

Kissinger goes on to say : "It (India) took no responsibility for the Bengali guerrillas' contribution to the chaos. Though they were recruited on Indian soil, trained by Indian officers, equipped with Indian arms, and supported by Indian artillery from the Indian side of the frontier, India claimed

that they were not under its control." Kissinger should know that guerrillas fighting for their freedom are not docile animals. They were not under India's control, although India had full sympathy with them. How could India give any promises on behalf of the Bangla Deshi freedom fighters ? Only Sheikh Mujib, if he had been released in time, could have given such an assurance. Kissinger seems to insinuate that the Bangla Deshi guerrillas were merely puppets in the hands of India. He shows, or deliberately feigns, an utter ignorance of the motivations and methods of guerrilla freedom fighters, not ever having been one himself.

Kissinger then says : "Jha told me on October 8, that India would act by the end of the year if its terms were not met ; similar statements were made to American diplomats in New Delhi by the Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary. India deliberately set a deadline so short that it was bound to shake the constitutional structure of Pakistan." I do not know whether Kissinger is deliberately distorting what Jha told him on October 8, or has put words into his mouth. As far as I know Jha did not issue any such threat nor did Foreign Minister Swaran Singh or I, as Foreign Secretary, make any such statements to American diplomats. What we did say was that the situation was explosive ; if Sheikh Mujib was not released and negotiations were not held with him, there could be no political solution of the Bangla Desh problem, as we saw it. Yes, time was of the essence. The political, economic social and military structure of Pakistan in the Eastern Wing was already shaky. It could only be saved by immediate and unconditional release of Sheikh Mujib but neither Washington nor Islamabad was willing to give any assurance on this crucial point. The responsibillity for the ultimate shake-up of the constitutional structure of Pakistan lay with the Pakistani rulers themselves and with those (the USA and China) who encouraged them by promises of support.

Blaming India was not enough for Kissinger. He goes on to blame the Soviet Union also. He says : "The Soviet Union played a highly inflammatory role . . . Moscow was acting throughout like a pyromaniac who wants credit for having called the fire department to the fire he has set." It is for the Soviet Union to defend itself. All I can say is that it is true

that they did not try to twist our arms as Washington tried by suspending aid to India and by sending the Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal. The description 'pyromaniac' is more applicable to the pressure tactics employed by Nixon and Kissinger against India and the encouragement they gave to Yahya Khan than to Moscow.

Referring to Gromyko's meeting with Nixon on September 29, Kissinger says: "He (Gromyko) gave no evidence for his interesting judgement that the demonstrably weaker country, cut-off from all supplies of arms, was likely to attack the stronger. Nor did he explain why we could not be given the period till March to see what could be done after the transfer of power to civilian hands in Pakistan." I do not know what Gromyko has to say in reply to this. So far as India is concerned, if Gromyko said what is attributed to him by Kissinger, he was only speaking the truth on the basis of past events; and the truth of it was clear and became even clearer day by day until December 3, when Pakistan launched its blitzkrieg attack against India from the Western Wing, in her desperate effort to divert world attention from the freedom struggle in East Pakistan by escalating it into an Indo-Pak war.

It is surprising that a clever man like Kissinger should offer such a simplistic explanation as "India's opportunity to humiliate Pakistan was also the Soviet Union's opportunity to humiliate China." He ignores the basic point at issue, i.e., the inalienable right of people to overthrow their Government, if it violates their basic fundamental right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I have already mentioned that the basic reason for the 'tilt' was Nixon's and Kissinger's 'China initiative'. A further reason has been indicated by Kissinger himself when he says: "If India got away with such tactics, these might well spread to the Middle East, where Egypt, which also had a friendship treaty with Moscow, was threatning in a so-called year of decision to settle its grievance by war." The trouble with Nixon and Kissinger was that they imagined themselves to be the world's policemen and fire-brigade. They were keen to start fires and then put them out and take all the credit for themselves. They were more engrossed in dealing with crises created by their own short-sighted policies than with normal situations like

improvement of relations with a country such as India. This was demonstrated later by their diplomacy in the Middle East where they succeded in dividing the Arab World because of their desire to reduce Soviet influence in the area and gain supremacy for themselves. I do not wish to dwell on the Middle East situation here but much more could be said on that which has not yet been said.

Kissinger has made one of the few honest and correct statements when he says ; "It is clear in retrospect that we vastly overestimated the impact on India of the threat to cut off aid." I wish he had made some more confessions like that. Perhaps he may do so in the second volume of his book dealing with the years, 1973-76.

Kissinger has insinuated many things which are not borne out by facts :

1. "Bhutto agreed that the leading position in a new Government should go to East Pakistan. Mujib can play an active role. There was now little doubt left that East Pakistan would be able to decide its future once Yahya had stepped down." Was it not Bhutto who opposed Mujib's claim to be the Prime Minister of Pakistan, on the basis of his (Mujib's) electoral victory ?
2. "Mujib's death sentence would not be carried out ; the civilian Government could deal with his future within three months." (October 11 and October 16).
   It is obvious that the promise not to carry out the death sentence against Mujib was held as a Damocles' sword to pressurise Bangla Desh. But when Bhutto realised the game was up, he released Mujib in order to become himself the head of Government in West Pakistan.
   "A mutual troop withdrawal, the Foreign Minister (Swaran Singh) indicated, was unacceptable, but a unilateral Pakistani withdrawal from the frontier would be useful and India might reconsider if the Pakistanis in fact withdrew." (October 12)
   Kissinger fails to mention that while the Pakistani troops in the West were permanently stationed within

> a few hours' march from the border, Indian troops were two to four days by road or rail from the border. Obviously, simultaneous and mutual withdrawals would operate in favour of Pakistan and against India, but that did not bother Kissinger. He wanted Yahya to have the military advantage under cover of 'mutual and simultaneous withdrawals."

I have quoted the above three instances only, although many more could be cited. Kissinger's main anxiety seemed to be to justify Nixon's order of October 19, to "hit the Indians again on this." Kissinger had perhaps hoped that his appeals and remonstrances to Moscow would compel the Soviets to put pressure on India or force India to change her policy. He was disappointed that Moscow did not oblige. As he says: "On October 23, we received the Soviet answer. It was idential with New Delhi's. The only effective way of avoiding war was the immediate release of Mujib and the speediest political settlement in East Pakistan." The Soviets understood and appreciated the realities of the situation much better and more accurately than Nixon and Kissinger did.

He goes on to say: "On November 1, the Indian army took major action to silence Pakistani artillery batteries, which they claimed had fired on Indian territory. (Considering that Pakistani forces in the East were outnumbered by some five to one and had to fight a guerrilla war, their incentive to initiate hostilities could not have been high)." Kissinger ignores the fact that China had promised support, even military intervention, to Yahya Khan and he also expected American support. A desperate man in a desperate situation, particularly a military dictactor, takes desperate measures. Yahya Khan was no exception.

Nixon and Kissinger used to meet leaders from the Third World, some of whom would not dare to be frank and honest with them. Or they were used to dealing with the leaders of their client States like Yahya Khan who dared not say no to them. Mrs Gandhi was a different kind of a leader representing a different kind of country. She did not express "admiration for Nixon's handling of Vietnam and the China initiative", as Kissinger says; but she did express the hope that US withdrawal

from Vietnam and normalisation of US relations with Peking might lead to peace and relaxation of tension in the region. Expression of such hopes is not unusual between heads of two governments. But Nixon was not used to such expressions and as Kissinger says "he reacted with the glassy-eyed politeness which told those who knew him that his resentments were being kept in check only by his reluctance to engage in face-to-face disagreement." What self-control indeed!

Kissinger gives his own assessment of Mrs Gandhi which is slightly different from Nixon's. "Her dislike of Nixon, expressed in the icy formality of her manner, was perhaps compounded by the uneasy recognition that this man whom her whole upbringing caused her to disdain perceived international relations in a manner uncomfortably close to her own. It was not that she was a hypocrite, as Nixon thought; this assumed that she was aware of a gap between her actions and her values. It was rather that for her, interest and her values were inseparable." The comment is a typical example of Kissinger's attempt to damn people he does not like with faint praise. He adds : "My own views of Mrs Gandhi were similar to Nixon's, the chief difference being that I did not take her condescension personally." I recall how Kissinger felt on the first day of his visit to Delhi in October 1974, when Mrs Gandhi went out of Delhi to keep a previous engagement! Kissinger goes on to say : "Mrs Gandhi was a strong personality, relentlessly pursuing India's national interest with single-mindedness and finesse. I respected her strength even when her policies were hurtful to our national interest .... We could no more permanently 'lose' India than we could permanently 'win' it. .... She would repair our strained relations rapidly after the immediate blow-up was over; paradoxically, the greater the strains, the higher her incentive to restore at least the appearance of normality. And so it turned out to be." Kissinger is talking like a historian with the advantge of the hindsight of 1979. If he had felt this way in 1971, his advice to Nixon would have been somewhat different.

Kissinger's knowledge of India is elementary; otherwise, he would not make such a statement as this : "Whether it turned nationalist or radical, Bangla Desh would over time accentuate India's centrifugal tendencies. It might set a precendent for the

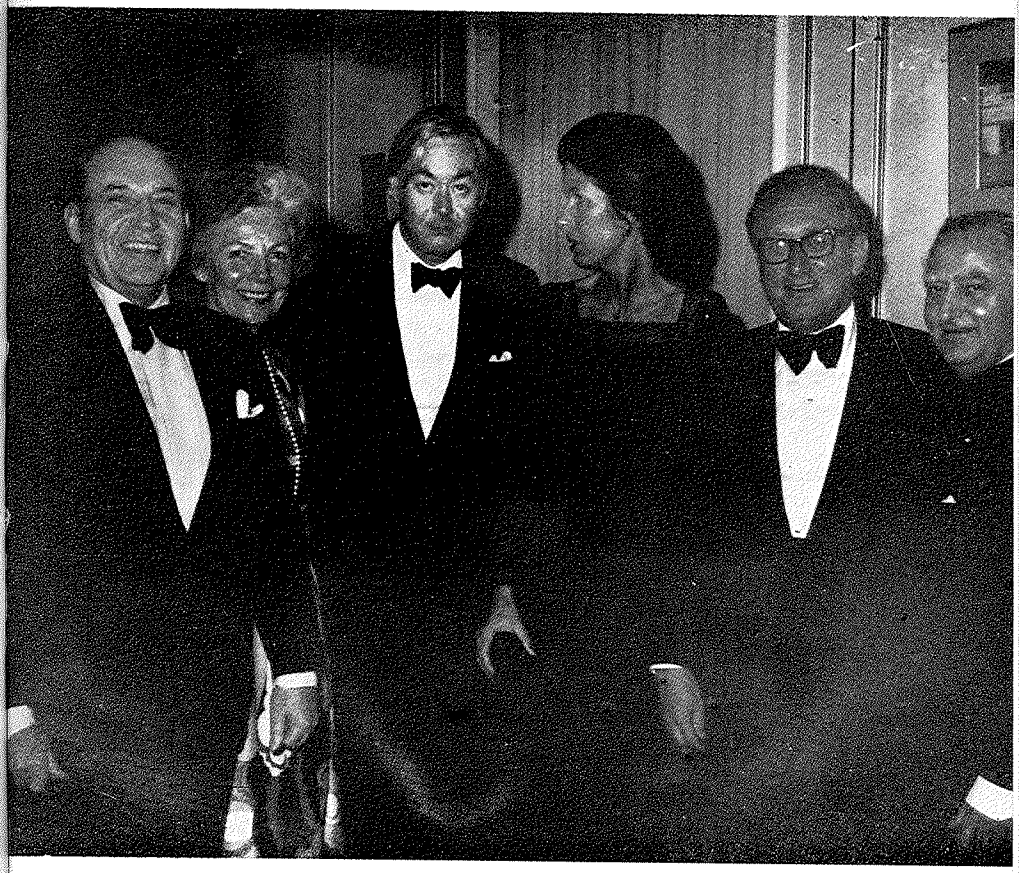
creation of other Moslem States." This is a masterpiece which only a Machiavellian mind like that of Kissinger could invent with his fertile imagination unless he had some plans to help to bring this about or information from his 'usual' reliable source. (There is no Muslim majority area in India adjoining Bangla Desh.) He indulges in super-hyperbole when he says' "Yahya's mounting concessions aggravated Mrs Gandhi's problem . . . . A negotiation between Bangla Desh representatives and Pakistan would have circumscribed, if not ended, India's ability to force the pace. India had to act before this sequence came to pass. Mrs Gandhi was going to war not because she was convinced of our failure but because she feared our success." One can forgive ignorance and ignore impertinence but this is the height of both.

Kissinger's description of the Nixon-Gandhi conversation as a "classic dialogue of the deaf" is funny but untrue. His comment : "the two leaders failed to hear each other not because they did not understand but because they understood each other too well" is a literary masterpiece but wide of the mark. Nixon did not understand India or Mrs Gandhi because he had a closed mind. The Indians understood America and Nixon because we had learned the lesson the hard way from 1948 onwards.

Kissinger is a greate twister of words and situations. He says : "Her (Mrs Gandhi's) real obsession was the nature of Pakistan, not the injustices being committed in a portion of that tormented country." If any Indian leader was not obsessed with the nature of Pakistan, it was Mrs Gandhi and I say this from personal knowledge and experience.

Kissinger goes on to say : "By November 10, news of penetration by Indian troops into Pakistan could no longer be ignored . . . . Jha denied any Indian involvement; we could not challenge this untruth without revealing our intelligence sources. In the first half of November, we received reports that some Indian officials were speaking of the probability of war before the end of the month. They proved to be off by only a week." One does not know of the reports and "source' of information Kissinger relies on in making this statement. He might, however, have quoted the statement of Yahya Khan to

an American newspaperman ten days before December 3, that he would be fighting India in exactly 10 days' time—a statement which was proved correct and was not off by even a single day.



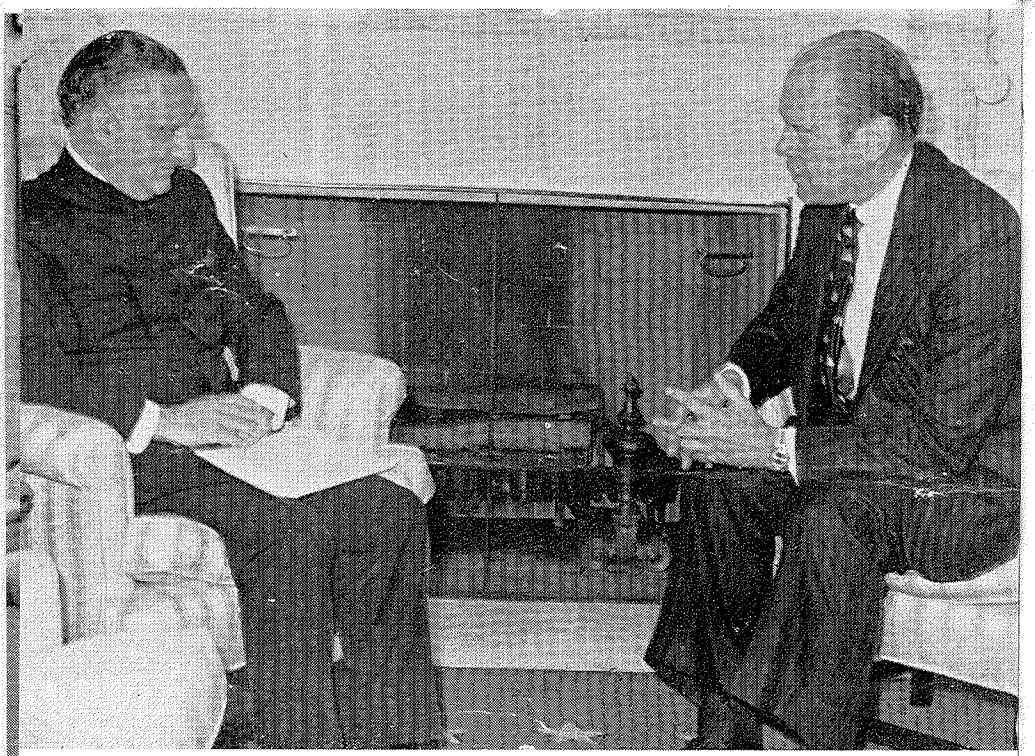
Author (Right to left) Henry Kissinger, Mrs Kissinger, Ambassador Moynihan, Mrs & Ambassador Saxbe. Indian Embassy reception, Washington DC 1974

Author being interviewed by Genl. Koulak at 'San Diego Union' office, San Diego USA 1976

Author proposing Toast at his Dinner for Foreign Minister Chavan, Washington 1975

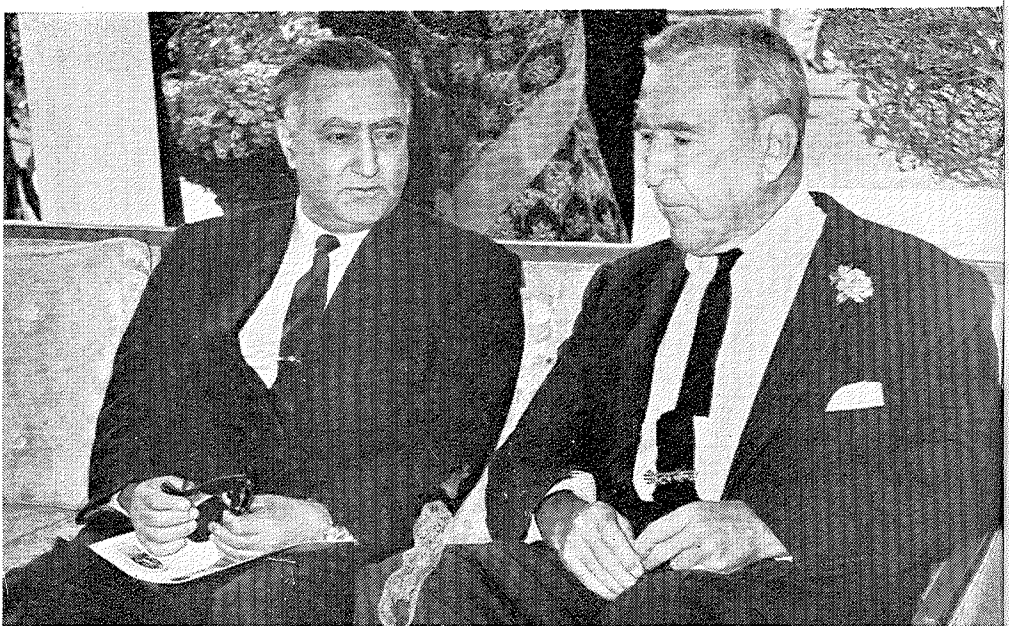
"NOW WHAT?"

Cartoon in Indian Express by Sudhir Dar, showing Author and Ambassador Moynihan trying to save Indo-US relations



President Gerald R. Ford & Author. White House, Washington DC 1975

Author with US Ambassador Chester Bowles, New Delhi



9

Kissinger's Distortions

Statesmen or soldiers do not take war lightly or go to war without weighing its consequences. But military dictators who combine both military and politcal power are sometimes apt to exaggerate their own strength and underestimate that of others. This leads to military adventures which may ultimately boomerang on the military dictator himself.

Gone are the days when an Alexander or a Gengiz Khan could over-run large parts of Asia and Europe with his infantry or cavalry. The world witnessed adventures of a different kind in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The wars in Europe, like World War I and World War II, were started because of clashes of national interests and the attempt by some to dominate the whole of Europe. Hitler is an example of an ambitious dictator wanting to dominate the whole world. He started a war that engulfed the whole world, ultimately resulted in his defeat and the defeat of what he stood for—NAZISM.

Yahya Khan was a different kind of a dictator. He was a simple soldier, more like a sergeant-major than a general, and anti-intellectual in his mental make-up. As Kissinger has said in his book, he was a "simple-minded soldier". When such a man becomes the political head of State, he can indeed be dangerous.

How and why did Pakistan and India get involved in a bloody conflict in 1971? Historians and military experts can go into the details of the war and give their analysis and assessment of its causes. Who started it and why? What were the motivations behind it? What was its impact on this region

of the world and the Super Powers' struggle in the sub-continent?

Kissinger has tried to make out that India wanted to become the 'dominant' power on the sub-continent and therefore, dismembered Pakistan. This is not only factually incorrect but also historically untenable. The trouble with Kissinger and most of the Western politicians has been that they have suffered from what is called the Indo-Pak 'parity complex'. India accepted the partition of the sub-continent with the full realisation that Pakistan was a new sovereign, independent country. If anyone is to blame for the dismemberment of Pakistan into two, it is the West Pakistani rulers themselves and not anybody else. Their treatment of the Eastern Wing and the Bangla Deshis who formed the majority of the population of Pakistan was such that there could be no other result of their policies except Bangladesh wanting independence from the Western Wing. India did not bring this about; on the contrary, Mrs. Gandhi tried till the very last for a political settlement between Sheikh Mujib and Yahya Khan.

Kissinger's description of the developing crisis in Bangla Desh and India's involvement in it is, to put it mildly, biased against India and based on distortion of facts. While he repeats his thesis that India started the war, he has tried to sweeten this bitter pill by mild criticism of Nixon and Yahya Khan on a minor point. Anyone with a knowledge of the facts at the time can see through this subterfuge.

He admits that India was subject to economic strain because of the large-scale movement of refugees from Bangla Desh into India. He also admits that "the United States could not condone a brutal military repression in which thousands of civilians were killed and from which millions ran to India for safety. There was no doubt about the strong-arm tactics of the military." Then he lets the cat out of the bag by saying: "But Pakistan was our sole channel to China; once it was closed off, it could take months to make alternative arrangements." He goes on to say: "Throughout April (1971) my major task was to get control of the Governmental process with two objectives—to preserve the channel to Peking and to preserve the possibility of a political solution in Pakistan." He might have admitted that his main objective was the

first, i.e., to preserve the channel to Peking and the second only a marginal factor subject to the first over riding consideration. Hence his and Nixon's reluctance to persuade Yahya to release Mujib and negotiate with him.

I do not wish to go into a point-by-point detailed criticism of Kissinger's thesis but some facts are important enough to be mentioned in order to set the record straight. If Kissinger was convinced that "East Pakistan would eventually become independent," his actions belied this conviction. In order to justify the tilt, he goes on to say : "our policy was to 'give the facts time to assert themselves'." He also complains that Mrs. Gandhi did not give Nixon any specific time-table. How could she? The question was immediate and urgent and Kissinger's plea: "to give the facts time to assert themselves" was only an alibi for Yahya Khan's delaying tactics. He distorts the facts by connecting "the enormous flow of refugees" with the "support India was giving in training and equipping the Bengali guerrillas." It was, in fact, the deliberate policy of Yahya Khan to drive not only non-Muslims out of East Pakistan but even those Muslims who wanted autonomy or independence. His further statement that "India reserved the right to define what constituted an acceptable political settlement" is not true. In fact, India from the beginning to the end suggested, pleaded and urged that only a political settlement could solve the problem and such a settlement was possible if Sheikh Mujib was released and negotiations were held with him. One fails to understand why Nixon and Kissinger could not persuade Yahya Khan to do this—when he was almost entirely dependent on them for political and military support. Was it because they were afraid that they would lose the 'channel to Peking', or was it because they could not endure the emergence of a sovereign independent Bangla Desh under Mujib and friendly to India? Perhaps, both.

Kissinger has the decency to admit that many Senators and Congressmen and practically all the media saw the situation differently from the US Administration. He has referred to Congressman Cornelius Gallagher. I remember meeting him when he landed in Delhi. I found him entirely pro-Pakistan, anti-India and anti-Bangla Desh when I first met him. I did not brief or argue with him but suggested that when

he came back after seeing the refugee camps, we would like to have the benefit of his assessment. When he came back, he was a changed man. I did not have to convince him as to who was responsible for the situation in Bangla Desh and the large scale movement of refugees. And the same was the impression of Senator Edward Kennedy whom I received on his return from visiting the refugee camps. I also recall meeting the New York Times correspondant, Sydney H. Schenberg, on his return from Dacca towards the end of March 1971. With tears in his eyes, he told me of the bloody massacre of Bangla Deshis that he had seen from Hotel Intercontinental in Dacca on that terrible night of 25 March 1971. The Nixon-Kissinger Administration was not only going against the realities of the situation but also flying in the face of incontrovertible evidence of their own publicmen and media.

Kissinger's sources of information are so secret that it is difficult to believe them. Sometimes one wonders whether he has not invented them or put words in their mouth. For instance, when he says about the Soviet Union: "Abandoning its previous caution, it had informed India of its approval of guerrilla operations into East Pakistan and had promised India protection against Chinese reprisals. A new and ominous dimension had been added to the confrontation." Not being satisfied with this, he adds, "This occurred well before the China initiative." According to Kissinger himself, the China initiative had been taken in December 1970 and even earlier. The Bangla Desh crisis did not erupt till March 1971. The question of any guerrilla operation into East Pakistan did not arise till well after that. Kissinger seems to have given expression to these wild untenable charges as a salve for his own guilty conscience.

Referring to his visit to New Delhi in July 1971, he admits he had "two partially contradictory missions. One was to prepare India circumspectly for the news of my visit to China. Noting the Ping-Pong diplomacy and our two years' record of overtures in trade and travel (the China initiative had started as early as that), I stressed that we were bound to continue to improve our relations with Peking. On the other hand, we would take a grave view of an unprovoked Chinese attack on India. If this unsolicited comment did not utterly mystify my

interlocutors, it may have given them a brief moment of encouragement—though that moment of euphoria surely ended with the July 15 announcement of my trip to China." Kissinger writes well. He would make an excellent fiction writer. He can exaggerate, he can invent. He has a fertile imagination and an excellent command over the English language. (For details see Chapter V).

While distorting facts, he goes on to say, "We must await the memoirs of my interlocutors to see whether the Indian Ministers considered my re-assurance the best we could do, given our constraints, *or an effort at deception.*" I can imagine Kissinger chuckling at his own cleverness for having succeeded in 'deceiving' India. However, he has only tried to be too clever by half in making this presumption. I liked Kissinger for his sense of humour. I even admired his witticisms but I could never trust him or take him at his word. I could cite many instances where he tried to mislead us and committed breach of promise and faith but I shall reserve those comments for a second book when Kissinger publishes Part II of his *"White House Years"—1973-76.*

Describing his conversation with Chou En-lai, he says: "Chou insisted that China would not be indifferent if India attacks Pakistan." Replying to Chou, Kissinger said "that the United States had a traditional bias with Pakistan, and we are grateful for its arranging an opening to China. We would continue to maintain friendly relations with India and we would strongly oppose any military action. Our disapproval could not, however, take the form of military aid or military measures on behalf of Pakistan." He goes on to say: "I returned to Washington 'with a premonition of disaster'. India, in my view, would almost certainly attack Pakistan shortly after the monsoon ended . . . China might then act. The Soviet Union might use the opportunity to teach Peking a lesson. For us, to gang on Pakistan, as our media and Congressmen were so insistently demanding, would accelerate the danger; it would give India an even stronger justification to attack. It would jeopardise the China initiative. At that time, prior to Nixon's visit to Peking, we had no way of knowing how firm China's commitment to the opening to Washington really was." In the last two sentences, cited above, Kissinger has confessed to the real reason for their

tilting towards Pakistan and against India. The invention of India's attack on Pakistan and the Soviet Plan to teach Peking a lesson are after thoughts intented to justfy the tilt.

Strange is the irony that America, which had spear-headed opposition to the People's Republic of China and its right to represent China in the UN, in the Fifties and the Sixties, should have made a complete somersault in the Seventies. If this was a genuine change of posture based on conviction or justice, one would have welcomed and appreciated it. But, it was only a posture to exploit Sino-Soviet differences and try to weaken them both in the process, without any regard for the interests of other countries in the region. This became apparent when Nixon visited China in 1972 and signed the Shanghai Communique.

Kissinger tries to befog the main cause of the Bangla Desh trouble and the Indo-Pak conflict of 1971 by over-emphasising minor points which are thrown in by him like red herrings to divert attention from the main issue. For instance, America's cutting off aid to India, the proposal to post UN personnel on *both* sides of the border to handle refugees, the proposal for the appointment of a civilian Governor for East Pakistan, the declaration of Yahya Khan to grant 'amnesty' to all refugees going back home except those involved in crime, etc. These were steps that could not and would not have changed the situation. They were meant to deceive the Bangla Deshis and delay the release of Mujib and direct negotiations with him for a political settlement. If Bhutto could release Mujib soon after coming to power, why had Yahya Khan not done so? Had the US Administration been really keen on this, they could have succeeded in persuading Yahya Khan. Without releasing Mujib and holding talks with him, a political settlement was not possible in the circumstances. And yet Kissinger says that it would have amounted to 'suicide' for Pakistan and America did not have the heart or desire to encourage any such thing. As later events proved, it was the undue delay in releasing Mujib and holding talks with him that stiffened the attitude of the Bangla Deshis and prevented a political settlement that might have preserved the unity of Pakistan. The mighty British could and did have talks with the Indian rebels, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru; imperial France

did have talks with the rebel, Ho Chi-Minh; but Yahya Khan, the mighty stooge of great America and China, disdained even to talk about Mujib's release or negotiations with him.

A few sentences from Kissinger's book are quoted below without comment. No comment is neccessary because they speak for themselves:

1. No one could speak for five minutes with Nixon without hearing of his profound distrust of Indian motives, his concern for Soviet meddling and above all his desire not to risk the opening to China by ill-considered posturing.
2. My (Kissinger's) nightmare was that the efforts to placate India would generate a war.
3. The gulf in perception between the White House and the rest of the Government became apparent in an Options Paper prepared for the July 23 Senior Review Group Meeting. It recommended that if China intervened in the Indo-Pakistan war, the United States would extend military assistance for India and coordinate its actions with the Soviet Union and Great Britain. Nothing more contrary to the President's foreign policy could have been imagined.
4. The President has said repeatedly that we should lean towards Pakistan, but every proposal that is made goes directly counter to the instruction (July 29, 1971).
5. He (President) thought that most of the media attacks were politically motivated; for his critics, Pakistan was turning into a surrogate *for Vietnam which was being made irrelevant by the opening* (*to China*). (August 11, 1971).

Kissinger admits "our main difference with New Delhi lay in its demand for a pace of change that might undermine the cohesion of events in West Pakistan." Indeed the pace of change was the basic difference in the assessment of India and that of Nixon and Kissinger. We had been pressing for months that Mujib should be released and negotiations for a political settlement held with him. But on August 9, Yahya's regime announced that Mujib would be tried in secret for treason. The pace of

change was thus reversed and not advanced. America did little, if anything at all, to hasten the pace of change which alone could have saved the unity and integrity of Pakistan. Delay only aggravated the situation and brought about the dismemberment of Pakistan. Kissinger's assessment, not for the first time, proved wrong.

Kissinger has allotted some space to American contacts with the Bangla Deshis. That also reveals the delaying tactics of Yahya Khan with the connivance, if not encouragement, of Nixon and Kissinger. To say that India was against these contacts is the height of untruth. These contacts had been made in Calcutta with our knowledge and at our suggestion. However, Bangla Deshis could not wait for ever or agree to hold talks without Mujib. Kissinger, without appreciating the sentiments and feelings of the Bangla Deshis and the importance they attached to their incarcerated and acknowledged leader, Sheikh Mujib, has reveald his mind in the following words : "At this point the release of Mujib was essentially a problem of face. The Military Government could not bring itself to commence negotiations with so humiliating a reversal." Why Nixon and Kissinger could not see the writing on the wall and advise Yahya Khan accordingly is not explained. Was it due to their mistaken belief that the freedom struggle in Bangla Desh could perhaps be suppressed if Mujib was not released, or their apprehension that Mujib's release might lead to the formation of a Government that would be friendly to India and therefore, perhaps, unacceptable to Nixon and Kissinger?

10

Failure of Nixon and Kissinger

When war breaks out between two countries which are near or distant neighbours, conflicting versions come from the two sides. This was also the case in the Indo-Pak conflict of 1971. While the US State Department wanted to wait and not rush into apportioning blame, Nixon and Kissinger seemed keen to put the blame on India. Without any evidence to support his statement, Kissinger asserts : "I had no doubt that we were now witnessing the beginning of an Indo-Pakistan war and that India had started it .... There was no pretense of legality. There was no doubt in my mind—a view held even more strongly by Nixon—that India had escalated its demands continually and deliberately to prevent a settlement .... But what had caused the war, in Nixon's view and mine, went beyond the refugee problem; it was India's determination to use the crisis to establish its pre-eminence on the sub-continent."

He goes on to say : "The Soviet Union could have restrained India ; it chose not to. It had, in fact, actively encouraged war by signing the Friendship Treaty, giving diplomatic support to India's maximum demands ...." And then Kissinger comes out with his real concern : "Since it was a common concern about Soviet power that had driven Peking and Washington together, a demonstration of American irrelevance would severely strain our precarious new relationship with China .... this almost surely would have undone our China initiative. I heard occasional comments in the interagency meetings implying that we were obsessed with preserving the trip to China. But as I said to Nixon, 'These people don't recognise that without a China trip, we wouldn't have had a Moscow trip'."

He reveals a second reason for the US anti-Indian posture : "The victim of the attack was an ally . . . Clear treaty commitments reinforced by other undertakings dated back to 1959 . . . We could not ignore them. To do so would have disheartened allies like Iran and Turkey, which sympathised with Pakistan, had the same commitment from us, and looked to our reaction as a token of American steadiness in potential crises affecting them. High stakes were therefore involved. On December 5, I told Nixon that the India-Pakistan conflict would turn into a dress rehearsal for the Middle East in the spring."

Kissinger completely ignores the fact that Pakistan had deliberately provoked border incidents by firing accross the Hilli Salient in East Pakistan into the adjoining States of India since November 21. He also conveniently forgets to mention that Pakistani fighter planes had violated our air-space and were brought down on our territory adjoining East Pakistan. He does not seem to realise that Yahya Khan was so desperate at his inability to control the situation in East Pakistan that he wanted to divert world attention from the freedom struggle in East Bengal by provoking India and converting it into an Indo-Pak conflict. What is more, Yahya Khan's military forces in East Pakistan deliberately desecreated Hindu shrines and temples and made the non-Muslims the special targets of their atrocities. They did this in the hope that they could involve the Muslim population of East Pakistan against the non-Muslims and divert their attention from the freedom struggle. They had also hoped that there would be repercussions in India and communal forces would be let loose and lead to Hindu-Muslim riots there. However, Yahya Khan and his colleagues had underestimated the strength of the freedom struggle in Bangla Desh as well as the high morale of the Indian people. Neither of the two things happened and Yahya Khan then let loose his forces against the Muslim population of East Pakistan who were united in their struggle against West Pakistani military forces in Bangla Desh.

All this perhaps is of no consequence in the mind of Kissinger who is obsessed with his concept of power. He even ignores the fact that it was Pakistan that provoked a blitzkrieg attack from the West on nine Indian air-fields in Nothern and Western India, on 3 December 1971, and formally declared war the next morning. India had shown great restraint by not send-

ing large-scale forces into East Pakistan when border incidents were provoked by Yahya Khan's forces there. India would have been justified in doing so but tried to localise these border incidents instead of enlarging the conflict. What is more, India refrained from escalating the conflict into West Pakistan until the West Pakistani forces attacked India openly on 3 December, and declared war on India.

It suited Nixon's and Kissinger's strategy to treat their ally, Pakistan, as the 'victim' of the attack and India as the 'aggressor'. They wanted to kill two birds with one stone—to placate China and to divide the Arabs in their struggle against Israel.

A third major objective was to dilute and weaken the friendship of India with the USSR and other countries in the region. To accuse India of its 'determination to use the crisis to establish its pre-eminence on the sub-continent' is adding insult to injury. India did not have to 'establish' its pre-eminence. India's concept of 'pre-eminence' is not like that of Kissinger who believed in America dominating all its neighbours and indeed the whole world. India believes that while she has to shoulder the responsibilities of her size and strategic position, she can do this only in cooperation with other countries in the region on a footing of sovereign equality and partnership.

Kissinger tries to hide the failure of Nixon's policy on the sub-continent thus: "Both Nixon and I had recognised for months that its (East Pakistan's) independence was invitable; war was not necessary to accomplish it. We strove to preserve West Pakistan as an independent State, since we judged India's real aim was to encompass its disintegration. We sought to prevent a demonstration that Soviet arms and diplomatic support were inevitably decisive in crises. On December 4, I told Nixon that precisely because we were retreating from Vietnam we could not permit the impression to be created that all issues could be settled by naked force .... As I told Nixon on December 5, we had to become sufficiently threatening to discourage similar moves by Soviet friends in other areas, especially the Middle East. And if we acted with enough daring, we might stop the Indian onslaught before it engulfed and shattered West Pakistan." By West Pakistan, Kissinger means not only West Pakistan but also Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

(POK) which is legally Indian territory. India could have justifiably recovered most, if not all, the POK territory which belonged to her but refrained from doing so because it would have meant prolongation of the war and more casualties. Also it might have led to the disintegration of the Western Wing of Pakistan where fissiparous trends were already evident in the North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Sind. India did not want instability and upheaval on her doorstep.

Far from appreciating the restraint shown by Mrs Gandhi, Kissinger has no qualms of conscience in calling black white and white black. So Kissinger, with Nixon's approval, sent the US Seventh Fleet led by the Aircraft Carrier *Enterprise* into the Bay of Bengal to bolster Yahya Khan's morale, to frighten India and to please the Chinese. As he says, "I thought it important to keep Peking meticulously informed of our moves; at a minimum, the Chinese leaders had to understand that we were not in collusion with the Soviet Union. . ." The Chinese Ambassador in UN, Huang Hua, whom Kissinger met at a secret location in New York city, according to Kissinger "emphasized that China would support Pakistan in the Security Council, but would follow Pakistan's lead as to whether to take the issue there."

Nixon and Kissinger had hopes that China would intervene militarily in the conflict and were disappointed that it did not happen. They would have liked to see India and China involved in another conflict and possibly the Soviet Union also. But neither China nor India nor the Soviet Union obliged. Nixon and Kissinger were further disappointed because France and the UK did not support them in the UN Security Council. On this Kissinger says : "Britain and France abstained—another example of the West European allies to let us carry the burden of global security alone."

As Kissinger admits : "The issue hinged on the geopolitical perspective of the White House as against the regional perspective of the State Department, and on the relative weight to be given to China and India in the conduct of our foreign policy." This then is the truth which percolates through the voluminous book of Henry Kissinger—*White House Years.* Kissinger also refers to the massive vote of 104 to 11 in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on December 7, and calls it a moral victory.

This is ironical when the US has violated and defied many Resolutions of the General Assembly since the beginning of the UN. However, the UNGA vote was not an expression of opinion on the rights or wrongs of the conflict but called for an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of forces.

I was with the Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh, at the UN two days after this vote. We met over 100 Heads of Delegations. Most of them belonged to the non-aligned, developing world. They admitted to us that they were convinced of the fault of Yahya Khan and expressed the hope that India would win the war speedily and thereby save them from the embarrassment of expressing another opinion. And some of them were allies of Pakistan. The attitude of Britain and France in the Security Council was that of an honest broker and they refused to take sides. The USSR and Yugoslavia supported us. China and the USA opposed us.

However, the issue had already been resolved by events on the ground. *The only contribution that Kissinger made was to prolong the conflict by one more week* by suggesting to Yahya Khan not to accept the recommendation of his military commander in East Pakistan to lay down arms on December 10. Kissinger advised the Pakistani Ambassador, Raza; "Ceasefire must include 'both' East and West Pakistan, otherwise the danger to the West would mount as operations in Bengal conclude. Islamabad, therefore, pulled back its proposal for ceasefire in East Pakistan temporarily."

Kissinger met Huang Hua for the second time in the CIA's walk-up Apartment in the East Seventies in New York city: "I told him of our reliable information of Indian plans to destroy West Pakistan's armed forces. . . . We were doing our part by moving a carrier task force near the straits of Malacca." Kissinger should have added "and expected China to do its part also." According to Kissinger, Huang Hua said: "He would inform Premier Chou En-lai of our views; he could tell me now, he added, that China would never stop fighting as long as it had a rifle in its armory; it would surely increase its assistance to Pakistan. *I took this—as it turned out, wrongly—to be an indication that China might intervene militarily even at this late stage.*" Dear Henry, there was a hole in your bucket which you had not noticed!

Kissinger tries to justify the American actions and attitudes on this basis : "A report reached us from a source whose reliability we had never had any reason to doubt and which I do not question today to the effect that Prime Minister Gandhi was determined to reduce even West Pakistan to impotence... Indian forces would proceed with the 'liberation' of the southern part of Azad Kashmir—Pakistani part of Kashmir—and continue fighting until the Pakistani army and air force were wiped out. In other words, West Pakistan was to be dismembered and rendered defenseless." Kissinger has not revealed the source of this report. It is not certain that one existed nor is it certain that Kissinger's intelligence did not put words into the mouth of this supposed source.

If India had wanted to do so, it could have recovered most of POK and over-run West Pakistan. But India was not so foolish as to entertain such a plan. I recall when Mrs Gandhi was addressing the National Press Club in Washington DC in November 1971, I passed on a piece of paper to her suggesting that she might mention that India had no designs on West Pakistani territory. She read it out to the audience and said : "Not only has India no designs on West Pakistani territory but none on East Bengal either." However, if Kissinger still wishes to believe his source, he is welcome to do so. This is not the first time that Kissinger has been in a minority of one or two even in his own country.

Dealing with the final phase of the Bangla Desh War, Kissinger says : "Nixon suggested to me on the evening of December 8, that perhaps we should cancel the Moscow summit. This showed the degree of the President's displeasure; it did not necessarily mean that he wanted me to carry out his suggestion. . . .I was to learn before the week was up that to take it literally ran a major risk of Presidential displeasure... But I did favor stepping up the pressure, keeping the threat of cancelling the summit in reserve. The major problem now is that the Russians retain their respect for us, I said. . .We have to prevent India from attacking West Pakistan; that is the major thing. If we did absolutely nothing, we will trigger the Soviets into really tough actions. I made the same point to Helms (Director C.I.A.) : 'If we do nothing, we will surely lose. If we do something and do it daringly enough and do

other simultaneous steps, we might get the Russians to call a halt to their games'." Obviously, the stuggle for freedom in Bangla Desh was like a game of Russian roulette to Kissinger. What perception and what depth of understanding indeed !

Kissinger goes on to say : "The root fact, which few were willing to face, was that the Soviet Union and India could have ended the crisis (and our own domestic disputes) by one simple gesture. All we required to let matters take their course was an assurance that there would be no attack on West Pakistan and no amputation of Kashmir." Kissinger fails to mention what the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and I, as Foreign Secretary, told the US Ambassador, Keating, repeatedly that we had no designs on any part of West Pakistan nor any desire to dismember it. But we reserved our right of sovereignty over the whole of Kashmir. 'Amputation' of Kashmir had been brought about by the Sino-US-Pak collusion, and yet we did not use force to recover our own territory in POK when we had the opportunity to do so in 1971. Kissinger cannot see the beam in his own eye, but uses magnifying glasses for imaginary motes in the eyes of others.

Referring to his meeting with Bhutto, Kissinger says : "When we met on December 11, I urged him to work out a common position with the Chinese.... The next forty-eight hours would be decisive." Kissinger likes to play sinister games as in the Arabian Night fairy tales. Kissinger adds : "I had to count on Bhutto to make sure the Chinese understood our position." Kissinger could not explain his own case to Huang Hua whom he had already met twice and had to count on Bhutto to do the job for him.

Kissinger has insinuated that because of American pressure, the Soviet Union sent its Deputy Foreign Minister, Vasily Kuznetsov to New Delhi "to urge Indian restraint". I can assure Kissinger that the Soviets are not as crude in putting pressure on their friends as the Americans sometimes are even against their own allies. Kuznetsov's behaviour was correct and he never gave the impression of putting any pressure on us. I have it from the people with whom he met during those days in New Delhi. (I was at the time with the foreign Minister at the UN).

Kissinger reveals, with some pride and pleasure : "Nixon, Haig and I met in the Oval office on Sunday morning,

December 12, just before Nixon and I were to depart for the Azores to meet the French President, Pompidou. There was a sense of urgency. We expected some Chinese reaction to my conversation with Huang Hua. It was symptomatic of the internal relationships of the Nixon Administration that neither the Secretary of State nor of Defense nor any other representative of their departments attended this crucial meeting, where, as it turned out, the first decision to risk war in the triangular Soviet-Chinese-American relationship was taken." It showed how dangerous the Nixon-Kissinger combination could be at times, by risking war to save their face.

Justifying the despatch of the Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal, Kissinger says : "It was also the best means to split the Soviet Union and India. Moscow was prepared to harass us; it was in our judgement not prepared to run military risks. Moving the carrier force into the Bay of Bengal committed us to no final act but it created precisely the uncertainty needed to force a decision by New Delhi and Moscow." Obviously, Kissinger has an exaggerated idea of his own skill and underestimates the ability of others to see through his game. He gambled and bluffed. We called his bluff and exposed his game.

He is a past master at trying to divide friends. He says : "By the next morning, December 16, we were receiving reliable reports that Kuznetsov was in fact pressing New Delhi to accept the territorial *status-quo* in West including in Kashmir." This is a white lie. Kuznetsov did not say anything of the kind to us. So far as West Pakistan was concerned, he did not need to and so far as Kashmir was concerned he would not dare to. As it happened, we did recover about 400 square kilometres of our territory in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and retained it at the Simla Conference.

Instead of giving credit to Mrs Gandhi for her declaration of a unilateral ceasefire on December 17, Kissinger says: "There is no doubt in my mind that it was a reluctant decision resulting in Soviet pressure which in turn was out of American insistence including the Fleet Movement and the willingness to risk the summit." Kissinger is trying to justify a wrong decision by results, which he imagined were due to his initiative. *The unilateral cease-fire was an Indian decision and not made under*

any outside pressure—Soviet or American.

Future historians will be able to assess the role of Kissinger and the success or failure of his and Nixon's policy towards the sub-continent particularly during those crucial years, 1969-72. He asserts : "What made the crisis so different was that the stakes were so much greater than the common perception of them. The issue burst upon us while Pakistan was our only channel to China; we had no other means of communication with Peking. A major American initiative of fundamental importance to the global balance of power could not have survived if we colluded with the Soviet Union in the public humiliation of China's friend—and our ally." What a confession ! What a perception of the state of world affairs! What cynicism and cold-blooded calculation! What a narrow interpretation of the national interests and the role of US policy! No further comments are necessary.

Kissinger throws more light on his own mental processes and imaginary hypotheses when he says : "the Indian Prime Minister decided in the spring or summer of 1971 to use the opportunity to settle accounts with Pakistan once and for all and assert India's pre-eminence in the sub-continent." This shows his complete ignorance or deliberate distortion of facts. He goes on in a hypocritical way to say : "We had no national interest to prevent self-determination for East Pakistan . . . . . India struck in late November; by the time-table that we induced Yahya Khan to accept martial law would have ended and a civilian Government would have taken power at the end of December. This would almost surely have led to the autonomy and independence of East Pakistan probably without the excesses of brutality, including public bayoneting, in which the Indian-trained guerillas, the Mukti Bahini, engaged when they in turn terrorized Dacca." Kissinger forgets the atrocities which the West Pakistani armed forces committed even on the eve of their surrender in Dacca where they dug a mass grave for 250 or more intellectuals of the University and other institutions. He focusses on the incidents of the Mukti Bahini. India did not encourage or justify bayoneting. But Kissinger knows that American troops in Vietnam did much more at My Lai and other places. War is an ugly thing. Brutalities and cruelties cannot be easily avoided. However, judged by what

has happened in other parts of the world, the Mukti Bahini behaved with extraordinary restraint.

It is not my job to pronounce views on the quarrel between Nixon and the State Department. Let Kissinger speak for himself. This is what he says : "Nixon's methods in part resulted from the fractiousness of the bureaucracy and in part from his own reluctance to discipline the bureaucracy. As so often, the handling of the India-Pakistan crisis reflected deep divisions within our Government that were compounded by Nixon's indirection in conveying his views." One wonders how Kissinger would have 'disciplined the bureaucracy' had he been the President. Unfortunately, or fortunately, Kissinger cannot become the President of the USA under the existing laws as he was not born there. It is for Americans to decide whether they should change the law in order to enable Dr. Henry Kissinger to fulfil his one and only ambition, i.e., to occupy the White House!

Relations between countries like America and India must not depend on the personal likes and dislikes of individuals who happen to occupy positions of power in either country. The stakes involved are too great for both countries as well as for peace in Asia and the world. Both countries need to review their policies and attitudes to respect the vital national interests of each other, and harmonise them with the vital interests of peace and progress in Asia and the world.

India has established durable friendly relations with the USSR. The USSR is also keen to establish normal relations with the USA. China's policy in Asia at the moment is a stumbling block to the further consolidation of *detente* and cooperation between America, the USSR and Asia. But things are changing even in China. It is possible, though not immediately probable, that China will also change her policies towards her neighbours and see the advantages of peaceful co-existence and cooperation and the disadvantages of conflict and confrontation. But this will take time. In the meanwhile, an understanding of each other's positions, national interests and policies between the USA and the USSR and countries like India is necessary in order to prevent the forces of war dominating the forces of peace. Where Nixon and Kissinger failed, others can and must succeed.

Epilogue

What is wrong with Indo-American relations? Why are they cool, albeit correct, at present, after having been through brief intervals of warmth in between troughs of cold and ice? Is there some basic gulf dividing the two nations that cannot be bridged permanently or is it that sincere attempts have not been made on either side in this direction? Is it because each does not understand the other adequately enough to attach due importance to mutual friendship? Or is it that there can be no real friendship between two nations so far apart geographically and economically, culturally and historically?

Why is it that India attaches high priority to America, whereas the USA attaches low priority to India? Are these differences only apparent and on the surface or deeper and more fundamental? Are the American people so very different from the Indian people or is it the differences between their respective Governments—in attitudes, basic policies and goals—that cause such frequent ups and downs (more downs than ups) in their relations? Is there any fundamental clash between their national interests or between their regional and global outlooks?

I often asked myself these questions when I was Ambassador to the USA during 1973-76 and do so even now, as many other Indians and Americans do. In my search for an answer, I travelled to over forty of the fifty States of America during the three and a half years I was there. I met a cross-section of the people—academicians and students, politicians and administrators, industrialists and workers—Catholics, Protestants, Mormons and Baptists, American Indians and Indian Americans, representatives of the media and their owners and editors—the whites, the blacks, the Mexicans, the Puerto Ricans, the Japanese, the Chinese and the Jewish people and others.

It was almost like back home in India, in some ways, and yet so different. We have our many castes and religions too, our 'untouchables' and 'backward classes'. Our politicians can challenge any other breeds of their tribe in the world, in their cleverness and craft, cunning and corruption, lust for power and lack of principles; our intellectual elite are as far removed from the people and isolated in their ivory towers as any others in the world; our media representatives have not yet gone to such lengths or sunk so deep in scavenging the filth and mire of private lives as those in the USA but they are fast approaching American standards.

These are all negative similarities but are there any positive ones also ? Yes and no. The two peoples are very similar in their modes and manners—friendly, warm-hearted, open, frank and sincere—unlike some other Asians and Europeans. Prosperity and affluence have made the Americans more tense and victims of the rat-race, more materialistic in their worship of Mammon, but also anxious to find the spiritual side of life and things. The Indians, by and large, are so busy struggling for existence, that they are losing their basic spiritual values in the pursuit of wealth and material power. Basically Indians and Americans are very similar in their outlook on life and approach to fellow human-beings. They are compassionate and want to be kind and helpful to others, they love peace and hate war. But, strange as it may seem, both are so engrossed in their domestic problems that they pay little attention to international relations, except when these affect their daily lives, e.g., the energy crisis, inflation, unemployment, etc.

But not so the intellectual elite who control, or think they control, the levers and corridors of power in both countries. Nor the politicians and bankers, the traders and industrialists. They are very much aware of their own interests and pull all the levers of power they can, directly and indirectly, to further their own narrow interests. Sometimes these 'vested' interests are at variance with the interests of their own people and often against the interests of other peoples. Hence all or most of the conflicts and clashes that occur between our two Governments and administrations.

The US Administration is very much under the influence of its military-industrial complex. Americans in leading

positions, by and large (with some honourable exceptions), have been manipulated by these forces. Nixon and Kissinger are two recent examples. John Foster Dulles was cast in a different mould but basically imbued with the same ambition and goal of making America the dominant power in the world. Franklin Roosevelt had vision and was different. So was John Kennedy though he lived for too short a time to mould the shape of American policies significantly.

On the Indian side, we had Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, both of whom had a vision of One World, where nations would live in peace and friendship, each in his or her own way, without domination of or discrimination against anyone on grounds of race or colour, religion or caste, wealth or power. But, we also have our Morarji Desai who is so obsessed with his own righteousness—in matters economic or political, social or spiritual—that he ignores the sensitivities and susceptabilities not only of his own people but of others as well. And of course, we have Indira Gandhi who tried to project the image of India, internally and externally, by giving the people a feeling of national pride through her own strong will and sense of determination.

While individuals, as leaders of nations, can make some impact on the thoughts and actions, internal and external relations, of a nation, ultimately, it is the people at large, in each nation, who compel the powers that be to mould and shape their destinies, But, in the immediate present and in the foreseeable future, the peoples of America and India are not likely to exercise a decisive influence on the policies of their Governments, unless there is a basic change in the quality of leadership in both countries.

As of now, the priorities—national, regional and global—of our two Governments are far removed from each other. For instance, while America figures very high on our priority list, India figures very low on the American list—way below Canada and the NATO countries, Japan, the Caribbean and Latin America, the Middle East and South-East Asia. As for China, the new-found friendship between her and America is likely to develop for some time, as long as the Sino-Soviet rift continues.

India's priorities are quite different. She has learnt by bitter experience that she cannot remain friendless in a world that

is still governed by the doctrines of balance of power and spheres of influnce. She needs peace to develop her social and economic structure. Attempts were and are being made by the USA, the West, and by China to pressurize India by propping up her smaller neighbours against her. India gained the friendship of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries who have helped and supported her stand on questions affecting her vital national interests. Regionally and globally, India has been trying to create an area of peace and cooperation in the subcontinent and in South, South-East and South-West Asia, as well as in East Africa, the Indian Ocean area and elsewhere, through her policy of non-alignment and peaceful coexistense. This does not seem, at present, to suit or fit in with America's concept of her global policies and interests in these regions as she sees them.

Can these differences in policies and points of view be reconciled, and, if so, how ? It seems that India and America will have to live with these differences as long as India is not politically stable and economically strong enough to impress America with her potential role for peace and progress in this region and the world. As long as India remains dependent on so called 'aid' from America and other countries, her voice will not be heeded or heard with the respect it deserves.

It seems, therefore, that both countries will have to get down to a realistic appraisal of each other's potentials and interests and come to a mature relationship based on realities rather than on sentimental and emotional hopes and aspirations that 'bind together the two largest democracies of the world'.

This is only the immediate and short-range view of Indo-American relations. Even this can be changed if leaders of vision and statesmanship emerge in both countries. However, it is on the long-range perspective that our mutual relations should be based, and will have to be based, sooner or later.

What is that perspective? Considering the size, resources, potential, past history and future projections, one would like to hope that Indo-American relations will gradually emerge out of their present 'non-state' into one that can lead to a state of the world where military power and economic strength alone do not determine bilateral and multilateral

relations. The things that unite the Indian and the American peoples are far more important and enduring than the things that seem to divide them.

For instance, both countries need and want peace. They have no designs on each other's territories or on those of others. Both nations would like to see a world order where no country dominates another, where the fruits of mutual co-operation can benefit both and mutual conflict hurt both. Indians and Americans are not basically suspicious of each other. They do not distrust each other. They speak a common language, believe in individual freedom and respect for the human personality. They can feel at home with each other. These things may sound trivial but they are not. In the long run, it is these things that count. But, they can count only when there is mutual understanding and mutual respect, non-interference in each other's internal policies and a spirit of equality and reciprocity.

This can and will come about when India is able to stand on her own feet and the American tax-payer is not made to feel 'that he or she is bearing the burden of India's development'. There can be no substitute for self-effort and self-reliance. America and the Soviet Union can help India in a spirit of partnership, equality and mutual benefit but not in the hope or belief that they can thereby change India's basic internal or external policies. The Soviet Union has realized the importance of India but the US Administration has not, as yet.

The reason for the present state of Indo-American relations is the belief of the US Administration that they can exploit Sino-Soviet differences for their own benefit. Hence, their recent efforts to befriend China, even at the expense of third countries such as India and Vietnam who are friendly with the USSR. Such friendship does not debar either India or Vietnam from developing friendly relations with the USA. But, friendship is a two-way street. The present policy of America in this region is short-sighted and cannot endure. It has already failed in Vietnam, Pakistan, Iran and Taiwan. It may meet the same fate in Korea.

It is time America and India realise that in friendship they can both benefit and act as a deterrent to forces and powers

that may wish to dominate this region and the world. This realisation is bound to come once America is disillusioned with the present leadership of China or there is normalisation of Sino-Soviet relations. But, that will take time. In the meanwhile, America should not and need not sacrifice the friendship of India and other non-aligned countries of this region by supporting the expansionist designs of China and treating this region as falling within China's sphere of influence, as the Shanghai Communique of 1972 tried to do.

India will survive her present difficulties and emerge stronger and more stable. America is already strong and stable. There is much in common between the two and little that divides them basically. The two peoples realise this but not yet the two Governments. Sooner or later they too will have to recognise this basic fact. We must not give up or weaken the reliable frienships we have formed, but, at the same time, we must try to extend the areas of understanding and cooperation with other countries—in the non-aligned world and outside.

These are the short-and long-term perspective of Indo-American relations. We have both to be patient and persevering, not lose sight of the long-range interests and not allow short-term interests to befog our ultimate objective and vision.

India and America, China and the Soviet Union have to live and let live on this one planet. They will have to come to terms with one another and with other countries to evolve a *modus vivendi* of peaceful and cooperative co-existence. The only alternative to that, in this thermo-nuclear age of ours, is total destruction of all mankind—a goal no one wants or desires. Indo-American friendship could act as a catalytic agent to bring about international cooperation and understanding. Hence its larger and long-term importance.

We in India must not feel unduly disheartened at the present and past policies of the US Administration. There is the 'other' America, of the people and the intellectuals, who compelled their Government to change their Vietnam policy. That 'other' America is what counts in the long run and not Nixons and Kissingers who strut on the stage for a while and then fade out. It is with this 'other' America that we should try to build bridges of understanding and cooperation.

As G. Warren Nutter says in his Epilogue to *Kissinger's Grand Design*: "Kissinger calls his diplomacy creative, but it is more aptly described as romantic. Such statemanship is rare in the American tradition, which favours a foreign policy resting on idealism and realism, mixed in proportions appropirate to the time. Above all, American foreign policy is obliged to be public policy subject to public scrutiny, appraisal and approbation. Mystery, Secrecy and *fait accomplis* are simply out of place. If this serious defect is to be remedied, the grand design must go back to the drawing board".

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